

VANITY FAIR

SPECIAL REPORT

INSIDE THE WAR ZONE AT NBC NEWS

By BRYAN BURROUGH
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FRONTIERS OF SEX

THE VERY LAST THING A WOMAN WANTS TO SEE IN BED

By GEORGE GURLEY
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Plus!

MARTIN AMIS
on SAUL BELLOW

JAMES WOLCOTT
on MEDIA PILE-ONS

LARRY DAVID
on RICHARD LEWIS

MICHAEL KINSLEY
on ISIS'S U.S. ROOTS

Photographs by
ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

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LEANS IN

By LILI ANOLIK p.112



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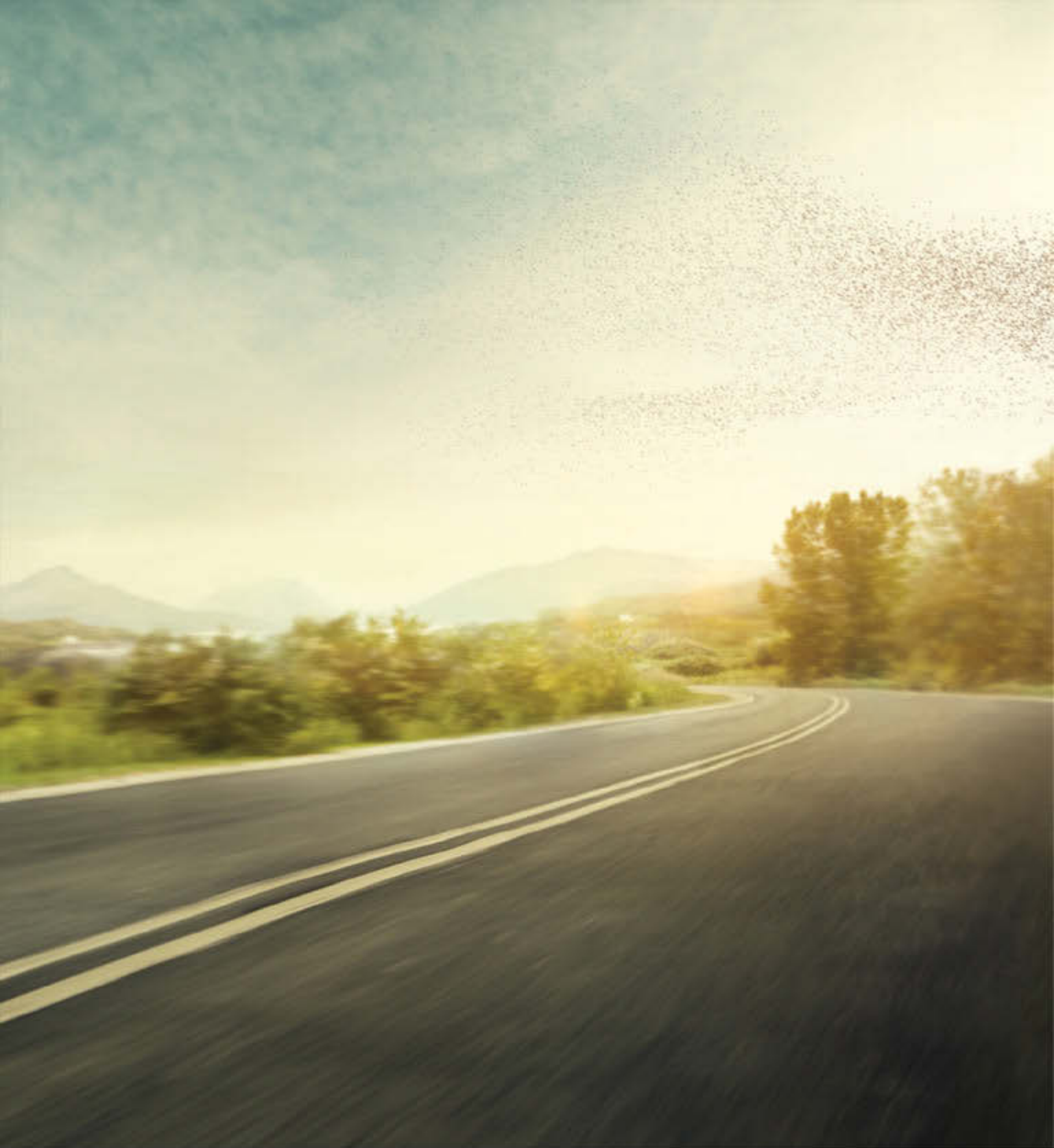
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FEATURES

- 112 LA VIDA SOFÍA!** *By LILI ANOLIK*
Her va-va-voom beauty, her endorsement mega-deals, her Latina accent—everything about **Sofia Vergara** is over the top. Yet, even with a new film and a wedding on the way, TV's highest-earning actress makes it all seem utterly natural. Photographs by Annie Leibovitz.
- 120 CIVIL WAR AT NBC NEWS** *By BRYAN BURROUGH*
Many **NBC News** employees believe the seeds of Brian Williams's downfall can be traced to Comcast's 2011 acquisition of NBCUniversal. With Williams's image battered, so are the reputations of the executives who oversaw a string of debacles that toppled the network's news shows from their ratings thrones. But it's not that simple. Photo illustrations by Sean McCabe.
- 128 HAROLD BLOOM'S CANON FIRE**
Spotlight on Yale professor **Harold Bloom**, whose latest book will provoke a cultural storm.
By Christopher Buckley. Illustration by Edward Sorel.
- 130 BELLOW'S GIFT** *By MARTIN AMIS*
When it came to his literary career, **Saul Bellow** sailed straight into immortality. His private life was another story. The first volume of Zachary Leader's new Bellow biography inspires a look at how the Nobel Prize-winning novelist used his personal dramas for his work.
- 134 LITTLE SHOP ACROSS THE OCEAN**
By BRUCE HANDY To British expats throughout America, **Cadbury** chocolate is the taste of home, and of childhood. So when **Hershey**—which licenses the Cadbury name for its U.S. version—brought suit to stop imports of the U.K.-made products, there were no stiff upper lips to be seen. Welcome to a chocolate-lover's nightmare. Photographs by Jonathan Becker.
- 140 K.F. PORTRAIT: BRYAN STEVENSON**
By DESMOND TUTU South Africa's revered archbishop celebrates the mission of N.Y.U. law professor **Bryan Stevenson**, whose Equal Justice Initiative and recent best-seller, *Just Mercy*, are aimed at ending the apartheid in the U.S. legal system. Photograph by Annie Leibovitz.
- 142 ORSON'S LAST STAND** *By JOSH KARP*
Orson Welles's *The Other Side of the Wind* is the most famous movie never to be released. As the struggle to bring it to theaters continues, an adaptation from a new book traces the filming of the maverick director's unfinished epic, a six-year saga of genius unzipped.

FROM LEFT: Saul Bellow (page 130); Sofia Vergara (page 112); Orson Welles (page 142); Cadbury versus Hershey (page 134).

VERGARA PHOTOGRAPHED BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ; GOWN BY NARCISO RODRIGUEZ. PHOTOGRAPHS BY GEOFF CADDICK/PA PHOTOS/LANDOV (CABBURTY), FRANK WASHALL (WELLES), FROM PHOTOPEST (BELLOW). FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS

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- 152 TRIO BRAVO** Spotlight on **Rufus Wainwright**, **Cindy Sherman**, and **Francesco Vezzoli**, in an unusual mash-up of opera and video art. By Derek Blasberg. Photograph by Pari Dukovic.
- 154 DAWN OF THE SEXBOTS** By **GEORGE GURLEY** Matt McMullen's lifelike **RealDolls** have revolutionized the sex-toy industry, attracting a whole new class of customer and satisfying a growing range of desires. Now McMullen faces a new challenge: how (or whether) to take his technological wizardry to the next level. Photographs by Jonathan Becker.

VANITIES

- 49 ON PITCH** **Edwin John Coaster's** latest correspondence.

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- 55 31 DAYS IN THE LIFE OF THE CULTURE** The **1 Hotel** opens in South Beach. Hot Tracks: **Mark Ronson**. Hot Type: **Hayward's** legacy of style. Private Lives: **Chisel & Mouse**. Beauty springs forward.
- 71 AROUND THE WORLD, ONE PARTY AT A TIME** **Vanity Fair's Oscar party**, on the grounds of the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts, in Beverly Hills, brought out Hollywood's biggest and brightest stars.

COLUMNS

- 84 THE SWEET SMELL OF DISGRACE** By **JAMES WOLCOTT** From Fareed Zakaria and Benny Johnson (plagiarism) to Brian Williams and Bill O'Reilly (confabulation), most **media screwups** inspire the same mix of lamentation and Schadenfreude. The difference lies in what happens to the culprits. Photo illustration by Javier Jaén.

FROM LEFT: Brian Williams (page 120); Kelsey Grammer (page 82); one of Matt McMullen's RealDolls (page 154); Richard Lewis and Larry David (page 90).

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ANOTHER WAY TO NEVERLAND

Spotlight on **Pan**, Joe Wright's all-star reimagining of the children's classic. By Laura Jacobs. Photograph by Greg Williams.

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THE LEWIS AND DAVID EXPEDITION

Spotlight on comedian **Richard Lewis**, whose new book comes with a stern warning from his old friend. By Larry David.

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THE AXIS OF ISIS *By* MICHAEL KINSLEY

A quarter-century after its first war against Iraq, the U.S. is still embattled with a Middle Eastern foe. On the long road from Saddam Hussein's aggression to the **atrocities of ISIS**, there are a few things that Washington should have learned. Illustrations by Barry Blitt.

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THE RE-EDUCATION OF DINESH D'SOUZA

By EVGENIA PERETZ Political pundit and best-selling author **Dinesh D'Souza** jettisoned intellectual credibility to spread an anti-Obama gospel to the masses. Even as he serves time for campaign-finance fraud, it's unclear whether D'Souza is a true believer, a canny salesman, or a victim of his own delusions. Photographs by Patrick Ecclesine.

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FANTASYBALL Spotlight on **Tabitha Soren**, whose photographs of the Oakland A's 2002 draft class—and their fates—are on exhibit in L.A. By Dave Eggers.

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BROADWAY'S *ROTTEN!* LUCK

Spotlight on **Brian d'Arcy James** and **Christian Borle**, co-starring on Broadway in *Something Rotten!* By Jim Kelly. Photograph by Ruven Afanador.

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PROUST QUESTIONNAIRE **CANDICE BERGEN**

FROM LEFT: Jim Parsons (page 80); Anna Camp (page 49); Candice Bergen (page 174); the age of ISIS (page 92).

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SWEET SOLUTIONS

Christina Tosi (who made cereal milk a gourmet ingredient at Milk Bar) shares a midnight snack, with photographs by Justin Bishop. Plus, an exclusive recipe for sesame cake from **Corey Lee**, who has earned three Michelin stars at Benu.

WHEN EBOLA CAME TO TOWN

In an adaptation from her new book, *My Spirit Took You In*, author **Louise Troh** recalls the day Thomas Eric Duncan arrived in Dallas from Liberia, where she had left nine children behind to make a better life in America—and where Duncan had unknowingly contracted Ebola.

A KNIGHT ON BROADWAY

Eloise illustrator **Hilary Knight** takes his pen to Broadway, where he draws Vanessa Hudgens onstage in *Gigi*.

V.F. GOES TO WASHINGTON

An exclusive look inside the **White House Correspondents' Dinner**, where VF.com documents the best zingers from President Obama and host Cecily Strong, plus coverage from the *Vanity Fair* party and portrait studio.

BACK TO VIETNAM

On the 40th anniversary of the war's end, Mark Edward Harris returns to **Vietnam** with celebrated photographer Nick Ut to see how the country has transformed.

VIDEO

VIDEO.VANITYFAIR.COM

SOMETHING ABOUT SOFÍA *By* JOSH GIBSON

Behind the scenes at **Sofia Vergara's** *V.F.* cover shoot, where the actress opens up about working with Annie Leibovitz and reveals her celebrity crush and favorite *Modern Family* episode.

SHAME SPIRAL *By* JEREMY ELKIN AND VANCE SPICER

Monica Lewinsky talks with author **Jon Ronson** about the consequences of public shaming.

FROM THIS ISSUE *By* ZANDER TAKETOMO

Anna Camp talks *Pitch Perfect 2* and plays a music game; **Cadbury's** biggest fans speak out; **Jim Parsons** gets personal; and a **RealDoll** factory tour uncovers the latest advancements in the sex-toy industry.

Behind-the-scenes videos of actresses Sofia Vergara and Anna Camp.



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EXPERIENCE

Hollywood Bowl

The legendary Hollywood Bowl is the summer home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the premiere destination for summer's best concerts. From Gustavo Dudamel to Ed Sheeran, the venue offers something for everyone, with an exciting, eclectic line-up. The 2015 season features Death Cab for Cutie, Erykah Badu, Sheryl Crow, Jamie Cullum, David Gray, Grace Jones, Diana Krall, Audra McDonald, Pink Martini, and more. Learn more about this summer's hottest tickets at HollywoodBowl.com.



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GIVE

Girl Rising

Girl Rising is a global campaign for girls' education that uses the power of storytelling, anchored around the highly acclaimed feature film, to promote the profound truth that educating girls transforms societies. Girl Rising storytelling along with targeted social action campaigns, can break down the barriers that prevent girls from going to school and unite parents, teachers, local and national leaders and girls themselves to envision a different future where girls can lead empowered lives. To read more, head to girlrising.com.



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VIDEO, FOLLOW @VFAGENDA
on TWITTER, INSTAGRAM,
PINTEREST, and YOUTUBE.



CONTRIBUTORS



1 Desmond Tutu

In this month's *VE* Portrait (page 140), Archbishop Desmond Tutu honors equal-rights advocate and MacArthur Fellow Bryan Stevenson. A Nobel Peace Prize and Presidential Medal of Freedom recipient, Archbishop Tutu is no stranger to the causes of the oppressed. But, as he says, "causes need champions, and Bryan—a gifted lawyer, academic, and writer—accepted the responsibility for championing the cause of righteousness."

2 Evgenia Peretz

Contributing Editor Evgenia Peretz says that the connection between a subject's private and public personas usually makes some kind of sense. Not so with conservative provocateur Dinesh D'Souza, whom she profiles in "The Re-education of Dinesh D'Souza" (page 96). "One minute, I'd be inclined to think him a reasonable person with a respectable audacity," says Peretz. "The next, he'd be comparing himself, on Twitter, to Martin Luther King Jr."

3 Christopher Buckley

When Christopher Buckley was a student at Yale, he did not take Harold Bloom's literature course, for "fear of being eaten and spat out," he says. As he writes in "Harold Bloom's Canon Fire" (page 128), his fascination with the polarizing literary critic remains. "We need critics—not to tell us what we like about art, but to tell us what is wrong with the art that we like." Buckley's *The Relic Master*, a historical novel set in 1517, will be published next year.

4 Larry David

In "The Lewis and David Expedition" (page 90), Larry David honors his longtime friend Richard Lewis. The article was adapted from the introduction to Lewis's forthcoming memoir, *Reflections from Hell*—the book's title making reference to an expression Lewis has long claimed to be his. When asked if he has ever had a joke stolen, David laughs. "I've had shows stolen! I've had entire series stolen!" *Fish in the Dark*, a hit comedy written by and starring David, is currently on Broadway.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 35



CÉLINE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 36

VANITY FAIR

agenda

 ADVERTISING
 PROMOTION
 EVENTS
 OPPORTUNITIES


BEAUTY

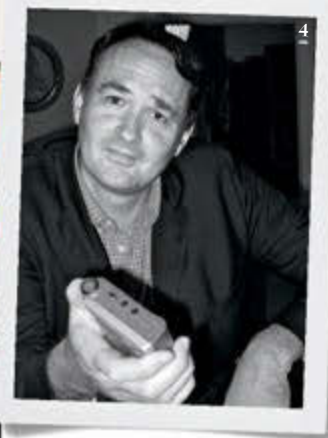
Before and After with Elizabeth Arden PREVAGE®

Elizabeth Arden and The Fashion Guitar blogger, Charlotte G., are joining forces to reveal one of the secrets to radiant-looking skin: the Elizabeth Arden PREVAGE Anti-aging regimen, including PREVAGE Anti-aging Daily Serum, clinically proven to reduce the appearance of fine lines, wrinkles, sun damage, and uneven skin texture. Born in the Netherlands and transplanted from London to New York, Charlotte was inspired by her past career in fashion—and an electric guitar belonging to her husband—to launch her personal-style blog, The Fashion Guitar. Check back in next month's issue to see how PREVAGE has helped Charlotte transform her skin from the inside out, and visit thefashionguitar.com/prevage to learn more about her personal PREVAGE experience.



CHARLOTTE GROENEVELD

FOR THE LATEST NEWS,
 HAPPENINGS, PHOTOS, and
 VIDEO, FOLLOW @VFAGENDA
 on TWITTER, INSTAGRAM,
 PINTEREST, and YOUTUBE.



1 Martin Amis

The work of Saul Bellow had a tremendous impact on novelist Martin Amis, who writes about the American Nobel laureate in "Bellow's Gift" (page 130). "When I started out, in the 1970s, the English novel seemed to be reduced to chronicling the ups and downs of the middle class," says Amis. "I subconsciously felt the need for more range—for the fertile promiscuity to be found in American fiction, and most signally in Saul Bellow."

2 Edward Sorel

Contributing Artist Edward Sorel, who caricatures acerbic literary critic Harold Bloom for "Harold Bloom's Canon Fire" (page 128), first encountered the Yale professor at a public lecture. "He was so arrogant and so dismissive of the crowd," says Sorel. "So, to do the picture for this article was to get even with Harold—it was an act of revenge." Sorel is currently at work on an illustrated biography of movie star Mary Astor.

3 Josh Karp

In researching his forthcoming book, *Orson Welles's Last Movie* (adapted in "Orson's Last Stand," on page 142), journalist Josh Karp confronted the misconceptions about the outsize director. "The way people remember Welles is all or nothing. He's a genius or he's a sellout who did Paul Masson commercials. He's our greatest director, or an irresponsible maniac," says Karp. "But, in truth, he was simply a great artist who was incredibly human."

4 George Gurley

George Gurley's article about the rise of high-tech sex dolls, "Dawn of the Sexbots" (page 154), marks the second time that he has investigated a kinky subculture for *Vanity Fair*, having previously reported from a convention of people who get turned on by dressing up in furry costumes. "After two days at the convention, I felt like the oddball—and the same thing happened after being around RealDolls and their owners," says Gurley. "As with so many things that appear bizarre at first, it's not a big deal after a while—it's even mundane."

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KATHERINE BRYAN (4), SUSAN KARP (3), MICHAEL LIONSTAR (1), LEO SOREL (2)

KERRY WASHINGTON, ACCLAIMED ACTOR,
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WAR STORIES

T

his month, *Vanity Fair* special correspondent Bryan Burrough sifts through the wreckage at NBC News, an assignment he began working on a month before the regrettable self-immolation of Brian Williams, the *Nightly News* anchorman and the division's bright and shining star. Once considered a paragon of American broadcast television, NBC News started having troubles long before the revelation earlier this year that Williams had misstated or exaggerated some of his activities in war zones and during his coverage of Hurricane Katrina. Indeed, ever since Comcast, the Philadelphia-based cable giant, took control of the network, in 2011, the news division had been on a slow, downhill roll. When Comcast took charge, NBC News had the No. 1 morning broadcast (*Today*), the No. 1 Sunday-morning broadcast (*Meet the Press*), and the No. 1 evening broadcast (*Nightly News with Brian Williams*).

Today and *Meet the Press* have since slipped from their prime spots, following a series of management missteps and the general gravitational forces of television. First it was the Ann Curry soap opera on *Today*, then David Gregory's torturous departure from *Meet the Press*, then the bizarre firing of a 38-year-old programming wunderkind named Jamie Horowitz, who had been lured away from ESPN to repair *Today* and was let go in a matter of months. And just when it looked as if things couldn't get worse, they did, with the Williams hoo-ha.

In "Civil War at NBC News," on page 120, Burrough traces much of the blame to the two executives that NBCUniversal's C.E.O., Steve Burke, a prized Comcast veteran, hired to run the news division. To be chairman of the news group, Burke installed Patricia Fili-Krushel, who had enjoyed an enviable career in programming and corporate paper-pushing but had absolutely no news experience. For the president's job, directly under her, Burke and Fili brought in a high-octane British television-news programmer, Deborah Turness. Burke, Fili, and Turness, it seemed, had neither the temperament nor the skill set to handle the hothouse orchids of the news operation: the on-air talent. "You have kids?" one NBC executive said to Burrough. "Well, if you let them, they'll have ice cream every night. Same thing in TV. If you let the people on air do what they want, whenever they want, this is what happens."

To repair the situation following the suspension of Williams, Burke turned to Andy Lack, a venerated NBC hand, who had first run the news division more than 20 years ago. Lack is a charismatic and highly vocal leader. (He also happens to be the husband of *V.F.* contributing editor Betsy Kenny Lack.) And he comes equipped with years of experience at both massaging and directing delicate, if inflated, egos. Lack's arrival may be good news for Williams—Lack was the man who groomed him for the top spot in the first place, and they are pals of long standing.



The job of being an anchor is a relatively straightforward one these days. You read a couple of thousand words of news four or five nights a week to an ever diminishing audience of grumpy retirees. To boost your credibility, you drop into weather disasters or war zones a few times a year for on-air cameos. And you go down to Washington periodically for one-on-ones with whoever is president. For doing this, you make in a few days what many reporters make in a year. Which meant that, when Williams stumbled, the huddled masses of the journalism trade became his high executioners. "When it comes to eating-their-own media frenzies, the full piranha-tank thrash," says

James Wolcott in his column on page 84, "nothing can compete with the classic tale of a marquee name brought low."

It could be said that the very things that set Williams apart from the herd—the ability to both deliver the news with authority and charm the pants off talk-show audiences—became liabilities. To those with less, he seemingly has it all: a great wife and a close and talented family, a full head of hair. Not to mention that first-rate sense of humor. The thing is, Williams also takes his position as the face of NBC News seriously, and with little of the pompous swagger that many of his predecessors had. Taken all together, he would be an enormous asset anywhere. And if NBC is smart, once Williams's time in journalism purgatory is up, the network will find a big chair for him and tether him to it for a good long while.

A small drama involving Little England and Big Chocolate is playing out on the narrow streets of Greenwich Village. On the one hand, you have two family-owned businesses, Tea & Sympathy and Myers of Keswick. Located just a few blocks from each other, they are both charming mom-and-pop throwbacks that cater to British expats and local Anglophiles, with their trade in the food and ephemera of what is essentially 1955 England: Hobnobs, bangers and mash, and all manner of Cadbury chocolates. The Cadbury products in these and other small British shops in the U.S. have always been imported from England. This past fall, however, Hershey, the American candy giant, which some time ago bought the right to make Cadbury products in the U.S., sued to ban the imports. Hershey did this so that it would have no competition as it goes about making Cadbury goodies the American way.

This has not gone down well with small shops like Tea & Sympathy, whose owners have declared all-out war on the faceless villains down in Hershey, Pennsylvania. As contributing editor Bruce Handy writes in "Little Shop Across the Ocean," on page 134, "If Hershey's version of Cadbury was the same thing as Cadbury's Cadbury, if they tasted alike, there might not be a problem." But the American iteration of the British original doesn't even come close. And just like that, the perennially complex special relationship between the U.S. and the U.K. has turned even the matter of the favored chocolates of an English childhood a little bit sour.

—GRAYDON CARTER

NIGEL PARRY

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BEAUTY IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER



DISHONOR ROLL
The façade of the Marlborough School, South Rossmore Avenue, Los Angeles.

CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL

A sex scandal shakes Los Angeles's Marlborough School; Hollywood legends deliver a formalwear master class; Christopher Plummer and Julie Andrews re-unite for one night only; and more

As a Marlborough School alumna, I am deeply ashamed of my school, specifically the board of trustees, which has thrown all the blame onto head of school Barbara Wagner ("The Prep School and the Predator," by Evgenia Peretz, March). Not once, even in their report, did they mention any of the board members—specifically John Emerson, who was president of the board at the time and the person Wagner approached with Mikaela Gilbert-Lurie's allegations against Joseph Koettters. The victims deserve to have everyone who knew about the allegations identified publicly.

WHITNEY STAMBLER
Los Angeles, California

Evgenia Peretz was perfectly on point: how is Barbara Wagner, a visionary in education who helmed a girls' school credited with the sixth-highest S.A.T. scores in the country, and beloved by a majority of the school community, solely responsible for how

Koettters was handled? She did not work in a vacuum or make decisions unilaterally.

How could members of the board of trustees put one another's interests ahead of their ethical duty to the Marlborough community at large?

And the biggest question of all: Did our current ambassador to Germany, John Emerson, knowingly let a pedophile free to teach at another school so as not to damage his own reputation?

PATRICIA MANZE
Sherman Oaks, California

The last line of the Marlborough article is a quote from one of the school's former board members: "We *all* failed to notice that times were changing." So, if times had not been "changing," then it would have been acceptable to throw the victimized students into the grinder so as not to tarnish Marlborough's reputation?

STACEY COBBETT SAWYER
Genoa, Nevada

My daughter attended Marlborough School in the 90s. Barbara Wagner was the head of school then. In many ways, she did a wonderful job, but

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I know from personal experience—in particular, one potentially dangerous situation involving students and faculty on a school trip—that her management of staff, or lack thereof, and her desire to keep uncomfortable situations out of public view resulted in a failure to act and in long-term adverse consequences for students. Your article gave her a “pass” that was not deserved.

STANLEY P. WITKOW
Westport, Connecticut

It seems reasonable to conclude that the Marlborough board studied the *Penn State Manual of Trusteeship*.

MARY L. AGLIARDO
Venice, Florida

FOUR AFTER SIX

While all of the subjects featured in George Hamilton's piece on the tuxedo (“Every Man a Star,” March) looked wonderful, it is this reader's opinion that none of them could compare with the sartorial splendor of the four gentlemen in Slim Aarons's 1957 “Kings of Hollywood” photo: Clark Gable, Van Heflin, Jimmy Stewart, and—excuse me if I swoon here—Gary Cooper.

Relaxed. Effortless. Perfection.

CHARICE BEARD-CHARTIER
Caledonia, Ontario

THE CAPTAIN AND MARIA

What a wonderful Valentine's gift *Vanity Fair* gave us with its 21st Hollywood Issue: the joy of seeing the forever beautiful Julie Andrews and extraordinary Christopher Plummer together again. After 50 years, the most beloved family in motion pictures is still around, making our lives happier with their fond memories, fantastic sense of humor, and witty remarks. You're damned right, *Vanity Fair*—the music never stopped, and it never will!

WALDEMAR LOPES
São Paulo, Brazil

MADE IN MANHATTAN

I enjoyed “The Manhattan Project” (March), but I was sorry to see that your list of the best films about New York started in the 1930s.

In 1927, my grandfather Harold Lloyd, the comedic Everyman in glasses, who rivaled Keaton and Chaplin, became the first Hollywood star to take his cameras and crew to New York, to film *Speedy*. In *Speedy*, which will be screened in April with a newly restored print at the Tribeca Film Festival,

New York was almost Lloyd's co-star: Times Square, Coney Island, Yankee Stadium, Pennsylvania Station, Central Park, Washington Square, the Plaza hotel, Sutton Place, the U.S. Customs House, and the Lower East Side were all on glittering display.

Today, the film serves as a time machine, transporting us back to 1920s New York in all its glory. As *The New York Times* said in its 1928 review of *Speedy*, “The introduction of the city itself is done in a fashion that will make every New Yorker proud of the Empire City.”

SUZANNE LLOYD
Los Angeles, California

CORRECTION:

On page 247 of the March issue (“The Manhattan Project”), the actress on the right in the bottom photograph was misidentified. She is Dylan Hundley.

Letters to the editor should be sent electronically with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to letters@vf.com. All requests for back issues should be sent to subscriptions@vf.com. All other queries should be sent to vfmail@vf.com. The magazine reserves the right to edit submissions, which may be published or otherwise used in any medium. All submissions become the property of *Vanity Fair*. A number of the letters included here originally appeared as comments submitted to VF.com.

More from the V.F. MAILBAG



This month, we begin with **Sinatra love**: “Bravo to V.F. for this wonderful article,” says Linda Beverle, of Lansing, Michigan, regarding “Nancy with the Lasting Faith,” by A. J. Lambert, granddaughter of Nancy Sinatra Sr. “Thank you for the excellent article. . . . As a devoted fan of Frank's for **70-plus years**, I often wondered about Nancy and her life.” So says Dee Hunsicker, of El Paso, Texas. “What a delight to see ‘Senior’ looking so **fabulous at 97**,” writes Natalie Skalla, from Tulsa, Oklahoma. Nancy Powers, from Taylor, Michigan, echoes that (“She is amazing and looks absolutely wonderful!”) and wonders, “What are her children Nancy junior, Tina, and Frank junior up to? What is Amanda [A.J.'s sister] doing?”

But mainly the mail was about what was **missing from the issue** (in addition to, apparently, **several Sinatras**).

Brits were missing from our Hollywood Portfolio—Brits such as Michael Fassbender (“One of the **best of the Brits**”—Judy Slatum, Capitola, California); Ioan Gruffudd (“He's handsome and has a **charming Welsh accent!**”—Becky Derych, Germantown, Tennessee); Idris Elba (“**Paste in his passport picture**, at least, O.K.?”—Fran Fruit, Winnetka, Illinois); Tom Hardy and Gary Oldman (“I take it [they] were not available to be photographed”—Pam Lohman, Fishers, Indiana); Steve Coogan (“Would have been perfect if you included [him]”—Candace Serviss, Loda, Illinois); Colin Firth and Emma Thompson (“How could you [omit them]?”—Diana Jelinek, New York, New York); and, for good measure, Tom Hardy again (“**Luscious**”—Sunny Merry, San Francisco).

And, according to some readers, certain **New York-centric movies** were missing from “The Manhattan Project,” V.F.'s list of the top 100 films set in that city: **Week-End at the Waldorf** (Paul Ross, Lexington, Massachusetts); **After Hours** and **The Panic in Needle Park** (Lisa Gilroy, New York, New York); **The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit** (James R. McCarney, Oakville, Ontario); **The Pope of Greenwich Village** (Richard Roswell, Studio City, California); **Frankie and Johnny** (Anna Kovac, Little River, South Carolina); **The Boys in the Band**, **Auntie Mame**, and **Bright Lights, Big City** (David Rison, Chicago); and **The Warriors** (Jon Carver, North Potomac, Maryland, “via Brooklyn, New York”).

Finally: “At the price of perforce appearing to cajole . . .” It's not often that we receive a letter (no, wait, not “letter”: **missive, communiqué, dispatch**—something!) that begins, um, thusly, and that goes on to include such delights as “**foci**,” “**amiss/wrong**,” “**apropos**,” “**thespians**,” and “**the persons there pictured**.” For this, Richard Halpern, of Delray Beach, Florida, has our profound appreciation. And not just our appreciation—our **gratitude**, our **thanksgiving**, our **gramercy** . . .

Elegance is an attitude

Kate Winslet
Kate Winslet

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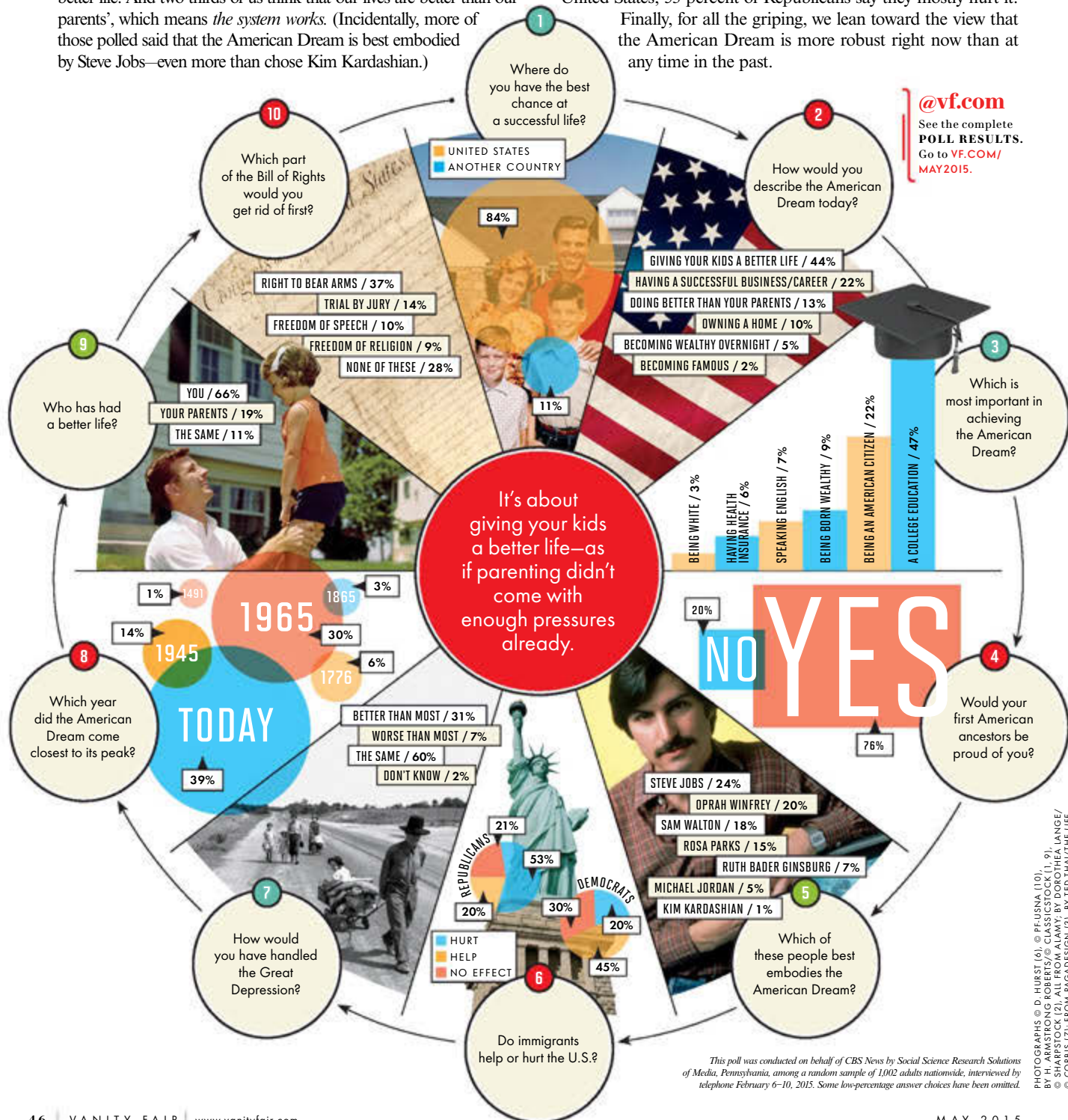
THE AMERICAN DREAM

There's nothing dreamlike about how Americans perceive the American Dream. Nothing surreal, or vague, or involving harried white rabbits in waistcoats. The American Dream, we seem to feel, is a simple, connect-the-dots matter; it makes perfect sense.

We have nothing against successful careers or wealth or fame, but far more of us believe that the American Dream is about giving our kids a better life. And two-thirds of us think that our lives are better than our parents', which means *the system works*. (Incidentally, more of those polled said that the American Dream is best embodied by Steve Jobs—even more than those Kim Kardashian.)

There's no mystery about how to achieve this American Dream: through education. (So say 47 percent, as opposed to the 9 percent who feel "being born wealthy" is the smart thing to do.) Nor is there anything really mysterious about the political divide in how we view those traditional aspirants to the American Dream, immigrants: 45 percent of Democrats say immigrants mostly help the United States; 53 percent of Republicans say they mostly hurt it. Finally, for all the griping, we lean toward the view that the American Dream is more robust right now than at any time in the past.

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MAY2015.



This poll was conducted on behalf of CBS News by Social Science Research Solutions of Media, Pennsylvania, among a random sample of 1,002 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone February 6–10, 2015. Some low-percentage answer choices have been omitted.

PHOTOGRAPHS © D. HURST (6); © PELUSNA (10); BY H. ARMSTRONG ROBERTS/© CLASSICSTOCK (1, 9); BY H. SHARPSTOCK (2); ALL FROM ALAMY; BY DOROTHEA LANGE/© CORBIS (7); FROM PAGADESIGN (3); BY TED THAI/THE LIFE PICTURE COLLECTION (5); BOTH FROM GETTY IMAGES

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COAST
Along

Our inscrutable contributing editor
EDWIN JOHN COASTER ponders
Fox News punditry, a new *New Republic*,
and lucrative matchmaking
in his correspondence on PAGE 50.

THIS
MONTHMEDIA
MOTHER SHIPWhich newspaper is **NOT** owned by News Corp.?

- a *The Wall Street Journal*
- b *Joondalup/Wanneroo Times*
- c *London Evening Standard*
- d *Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*

VANITIES

CAMP WEARS A GOWN
BY OSCAR DE LA RENTA;
EARRINGS BY HARRY
WINSTON; RING BY
CHANEL FINE JEWELRY;
BRACELET FROM HOUSE
OF LAVANDE.



ANNA CAMP AGE: 32. **PROVENANCE:** Columbia, South Carolina. **PLAYING HER PART:** After earning a B.F.A. from the North Carolina School of the Arts, Camp joined the New York theater circuit and had parts in *Equus* and *The Country Girl*, the latter directed by Mike Nichols. "He saw me in an Off Off Broadway play, so everything I've ever gotten was from *God Hates the Irish*, this weird musical that apparently everyone came to see." **RIDING HIGH:** Camp's cinematic break was in box-office smash *Pitch Perfect*, about an underdog female singing group. She reprises her role in *Pitch Perfect 2*, next month. **KEY NOTE:** On Elizabeth Banks, director-producer of *Pitch Perfect 2*: "She pushes you and makes you laugh and you can't be afraid of falling on your ass when you're around her." **PARENTAL CONSENT:** "I have done a lot of 'risqué' things onstage. They've seen me naked in *Equus*, and at this point there is nothing I do that shocks them." **GONE WITH THE FILM:** *Steel Magnolias* is one of her favorite films. "That term is perfect for a southern belle. My mother is someone who is so charming and lovely, but there is something tough as nails on the inside." **FAST FORWARD:** Camp, who was a series regular on *True Blood* and appeared in *The Help*, says, "My main goal in this business is to remain true to my art, but also to have fun, and grow, and learn constantly."

—KRISTA SMITH

*Answer: (c) *London Evening Standard*.

STYLED BY DEBORAH AFSHANI; HAIR PRODUCTS BY ORIBE; MAKEUP PRODUCTS AND NAIL ENAMEL BY CHANEL; HAIR BY MARCO SANTINI; MAKEUP BY TYRON MACHHAUSEN; MANICURE BY GERALDINE HOLFORD; ILLUSTRATION, LEFT, BY TIM SHEPHER. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS

EDWIN COASTER

Dear Graydon:

3/19/15

Howyadoin? Before you ask, the new kidney is doing great—who knew that Morley Safer and I were a match? My joke to Morley is that the only problem I have now is, every time I gotta go, I suddenly hear a “tick-tick-tick-tick...”

Anyhoo, I’m in play for the old Wieseltier job at The New Republic: éminence grise with great hair, \$75K + benefits. PROS: pre-existing relationship with T.N.R., prestige, association with mag helps me land college-speaking gigs. CONS: not-great pay, expectation that I will “post online daily,” personal discomfort with Chris Hughes. (You know how some people can seem too clean?)

Now, and here’s where you must be sworn to secrecy, I’ve also gotten an intriguing offer from the other side. From Rupert. He wants to bag himself a “convert” for the 2016 election cycle: someone to pull a David Horowitz and pendulum-swing from left to right. Basically, he’s offering me the same package that Michael Goodwin got: a N.Y. Post column, TV spots on Fox News, and a headshot that will make me look Australian. Goes without saying that the \$\$\$ is way better. But could I live with myself?

Then I got to thinking: What if we, you and I, outfoxed the Poxies? Played the long con? In other words, I take Rupert’s dough, play footsie with Jeanine Pirro and Shep Smith for 18 months, never break character...and then, at the end of it, I write an epic tell-all for V.F.: “I Was Rupert’s Rent-an-Apostate”? (Or “Renta-Postate”?) It would be the biggest thing you’ve done since Mark Felt. \$400K seems about right.

Thinkaboutit, big man.

Best,

Ed

Chris —
A semi-funny idea, but
way too steep. Also, Ed might
not last the 18 months.
Thoughts?
G.



CHRIS GARRETT

MANAGING EDITOR

20 March 2015

Graydon:

It is most curious that Ed should bring this up, as I have just received a résumé from one of his granddaughters, Keegan-Meghan Vinson, who will graduate this May from the University of Delaware. Blonde, communications major, “4-year member of Fightin’ Blue Hens cheer squad (& yayus I <3 Joe Flacco LOL).” Seems like she’s more Fox News material than Ed. Hmm ...

Chris

The COASTER
CORRESPONDENCE
*More of the very expensive
words of* EDWIN JOHN COASTER,
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

Illustration by TIM SHEAFFER

EDWIN COASTER

3/25/15

Dear Graydon:

So’s I just got off the phone with Chris G., who relayed your idea. Just trying to make sure we’re on the same page...

1. I turn down Rupert’s offer but use my juice w/ him to get Keegan-Meghan a job at Fox News.
2. You give me new V.F. contract. I send Chris Hughes a polite brush-off note and a suite of Geo. F. Trumper shaving products. Everyone’s happy.
3. Starting this summer, Keegan-Meghan calls me weekly from an untraceable pre-paid phone, spills beans on what she’s seen/heard. I take notes for story with eye towards early 2017 publication.
4. Keegan-Meghan seduces/marries Rupert, gets ironclad pre-nup, I collect half of what she gets.

VANITY FAIR

Chris —
I said nothing about
#4. NOTHING. Just me
Call it off, chop chop! Th.
Thanks.
G.

Cate Blanchett

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➔ HOT TRACKS: MARK RONSON GETS FUNKY p. 56 MARIN HOPPER'S HAYWARD COLLECTION p. 60 MODEL-MAKERS CHISEL & MOUSE p. 66



SEA GREEN

"I wanted to celebrate the beautiful things in nature and create a luxury green brand," says founder and co-owner Barry Sternlicht of his new, posh eco-resort, 1 Hotel South Beach, in Miami Beach. For more, turn to page 60.



Hot Tracks

MARK RONSON

I've been obsessed with music since I was 13," says guitarist-songwriter-producer **Mark Ronson**, whose No. 1 hit "Uptown Funk" (from his solo album *Uptown Special*) topped the charts for 11 weeks following its November release. What Ronson calls his "nerdy, encyclopedic knowledge of pop-music history," combined with years of hard work and a love of soul music and hip-hop, turned him into a big-time, Grammy-winning producer, who's worked with a wide range of artists—from Amy Winehouse and Bruno Mars to hot new rapper Action Bronson. Here he talks with **Lisa Robinson** about producing, living in London and New York, and the dreaded term "celebrity D.J."

LISA ROBINSON: Did you always have a strong work ethic?

MARK RONSON: A lot of it was work ethic, and I think I figured out what becoming a producer is. I realized I was never going to be a great guitarist, and, at the same time, I fell in love with rap music. I got turntables for graduation and would just listen to Funkmaster Flex or Stretch Armstrong's routines on the radio and copy what they did.

L.R.: You were initially referred to as a "celebrity D.J." What does that mean?

M.R.: I certainly wasn't a celebrity, but I may have the unfortunate dishonor of being the person for whom that term was invented. I hated it. I spent seven or eight years working in clubs where nobody knew who I was. But the fashion world follows hip-hop trends, I was hired to do a lot of fashion shows, and there were celebrities there.

L.R.: You spent the first eight years of your life in London, then lived in New York City, and you still have a British accent. Do you have dual citizenship?

M.R.: I got my U.S. citizenship in 2008 because I didn't want to be one of those people who complained about the president and didn't vote. When I'm in New York I feel completely at home, but I love the studio I built in London. I probably would say I'm a British New Yorker.

L.R.: How did you react when your first production work—with singer Nikka Costa—didn't meet its expectations?

M.R.: She had hard-core fans and was a great live performer, but it was my first lesson in don't believe the hype. Also, I saw other guys who were starting at the

same time as I did—like Kanye and Danger Mouse—skyrocket by me, so I thought, O.K., I gave this a shot, maybe I'm not good enough to be doing this. Then I met Lily Allen. And a little after that, Amy Winehouse, and I was just ready to make music that I wanted to hear.

L.R.: I always thought Amy sounded like a great jazz vocalist—like Sarah Vaughan or Carmen McRae.

M.R.: She loved all that stuff. She was a real student of jazz. She had a nylon-string guitar, and she could play "Moody's Mood for Love."

I learned so much about chords from her, and except for [the song] "Back to Black," which we wrote together, she had all the songs. We did all the demos for that album (*Back to Black*) in five days. We went for a walk, she told me the rehab story, and I said, you should write a song about that. She also loved 60s girl groups and Nas and Mos Def—but jazz was basically her DNA. What we did together didn't sound like anything whatsoever that was popular or on the radio; I thought it was a little too eccentric to be so successful—especially for America.

L.R.: Given her well-known substance-abuse problems, were you sort of expecting that phone call in 2011, telling you she died?

M.R.: No, I was surprised, because she'd been getting better; for the past year she hadn't done drugs.

L.R.: Whose idea was it for Bruno Mars to wear those hair rollers for your live performances of "Uptown Funk"? It's hilarious.

M.R.: That's Bruno. He's the first artist I've ever worked with who's had better production ideas than I did. We'd butt heads, then we'd do his thing, and I'd think, fuck it, he's right. Bruno is now in this amazing spot that not a lot of people get to—being massively commercial and also becoming incredibly cool at the same time.

L.R.: Were you concerned that people might think it pretentious that (novelist) Michael Chabon wrote lyrics for your solo album?

M.R.: I just thought the songs sounded a bit more odd than things I'd done before, and that he would come up with something more interesting than what I would have to say.

L.R.: Your solo album is diverse—from Bruno evoking the funk of Morris Day and the Time to Tame Impala's lead singer, Kevin Parker, sounding like a soul singer.

M.R.: That's just my taste—it's a judgment call. It's like a D.J.'s ear; you put a song on and you have three minutes to figure out what's going to blend out of that song into the next one.

Mark Ronson, photographed in London.

STYLED BY INGRID ALLEN AND LAUREN MATOS; COAT AND PANTS BY BERLUTI; SHIRT BY SAINT LAURENT BY HEDI SLIMANE; SHOES BY CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN; HAIR PRODUCTS BY WELLA PROFESSIONALS; GROOMING BY GARY GILL; FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS



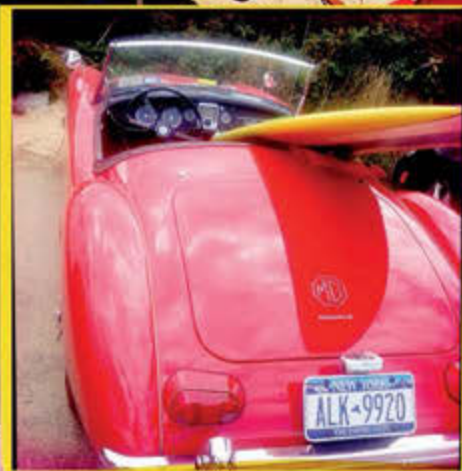
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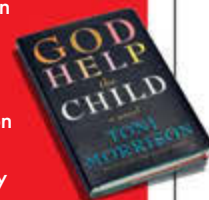
Clockwise from bottom left: the July 1966 models from 50 Years of Pirelli Calendar (Taschen); an American flag, beach umbrellas, and a 1957 MGA Roadster convertible from Ben Watts: Montauk Dreaming (Damiani).



Bride and Prejudice

Nobel laureate Toni Morrison is one of the gods who walk among us. A righteous, fearless teller of necessary truths, Morrison forces us to experience the realities of black lives on the soul level. In her sensually written and commanding new novel, *God Help the Child*, Morrison excavates the legacy of childhood trauma—how the burdens and shame heaped on us can never be lifted, only suppressed. Billie Holiday sang, “God bless the child that’s got his own.” Morrison’s coda: God help the children and those born unto them.

—E.S.



The Facebook revolution has given rise to a new art form, the digital essay. At the forefront, **Jeff Nunokawa** and his *Note Book* (Princeton)—elegant missives that will turn haters into lovers. Also this month: **Kate Bolick** cheers on single-by-choice American women in *Spinster* (Crown). Pioneering rock critic **Richard Goldstein** relives the 60s in *Another Little Piece of My Heart* (Bloomsbury). **Peter Coyote’s** *The Rainman’s Third Cure* (Counterpoint) meditates on his path to Zen ordination. **Jamie Brickhouse** plunges into his dark days of boozing in *Dangerous When Wet* (St. Martin’s). **Kate Atkinson** reconnects with characters from *Life After Life* in its companion novel, *A God in Ruins* (Little, Brown). Self-appointed patriots avenge the victims of the Armenian genocide in **Eric Bogosian’s** *Operation Nemesis* (Little, Brown). Debut novelist **Andrew Roe** ponders transcendence with *The Miracle Girl* (Algonquin). Entrepreneur **Christian Hageseth** rolls *Big Weed* (Palgrave Macmillan), blazing back to his heady trip through the legal bud business. An illegal organ broker gets into a spot of bother in **Brian DeLeeuw’s** unnerving novel *The Dismantling* (Plume). **Jon Macks** surfs the history of late-night TV in *Monologue* (Blue Rider). Devoted pen pals **Caitlin Alifirenka** and **Martin Ganda** pledge, *I Will Always Write Back* (Little, Brown), with **Liz Welch**. Tight-lipped reporter **Judith Miller** speaks in *The Story* (Simon & Schuster). **Tom Devlin** showcases a quarter-century of *Drawn and Quarterly* (Drawn & Quarterly). **Amanda Berry** and **Gina DeJesus** recount their agonizing decade in captiv-

Hot Type

ity, and their escape, in *Hope* (Viking). **Louise Troh**, the fiancée of the first man to die of Ebola in America, grieves in *My Spirit Took You In* (Weinstein). **Taylor Antrim’s** *Immunity* (Regan Arts) is a dystopian stab at New York City’s ultra-rich. Childhood hell-raiser **Christopher Byron** runs wild in *Tales from Bluewater Hill* (Significance Press). **Joseph E. Stiglitz** seeks to bridge *The Great Divide* (Norton) between our nation’s haves and have-nots. **Amelia Gray’s** sensationally weird stories are *Gutshot* (FSG Originals). **Michael Clinton** shows off his travel pics in *Closer* (Glitterati). **Cleary Wolters** frees fact from fiction in *Out of Orange* (HarperOne). **Fern Mallis’s** *Fashion Lives* (Rizzoli) command center stage. A cavalcade of pioneers, star chasers, and misfits parade through **Cari Beauchamp’s** *My First Time in Hollywood* (Asahina & Wallace). **Barry Estabrook** carves up the other white meat in *Pig Tales* (Norton). **A. Brad Schwartz** tunes into 1930s America’s *Broadcast Hysteria* (Hill and Wang). **Peter W. Kunhardt, Jr.** updates *The Photographs of Abraham Lincoln* (Steidl). **Gillian Zoe Segal’s** *Getting There* (Abrams Image) corners dream mentors—such as our own editor, Graydon Carter—for life-changing, real-world advice. *Read more. Read better.* —ELISSA SCHAPPELL



IN SHORT

Brett Morgen resurrects Kurt Cobain (Insight Editions). **Elizabeth Alexander’s** memoir shines with *The Light of the World* (Grand Central). V.F. contributing editor **Janine di Giovanni** develops *Eve Arnold* (Prestel). **Ivan Vladislavić** puzzles out 101 *Detectives* (And Other Stories). **Elizabeth Berg** channels George Sand in *The Dream Lover* (Random House). **April Bloomfield** and **JJ Goode** toss *A Girl and Her Greens* (Ecco). **Dieter Buchhart** and **Tricia Laughlin Bloom** open up the notebooks of Basquiat (Skira). **Jean Sagendorph** and **Jessie Sheehan’s** *Icebox Cakes* (Chronicle) are sweet. **Thomas Kunkel’s** *Man in Profile* (Random House) is *The New Yorker’s* Joseph Mitchell. **David McCullough** dips into the diaries of *The Wright Brothers* (Simon & Schuster). **John Lydon** holds nothing back in *Anger Is an Energy* (Dey Street). **Karl Ove Knausgaard** toils on in *My Struggle: Book Four* (Archipelago). **Jack Welch** and **Suzi Welch** train you for *The Real-Life MBA* (Harper Business). **Marc Weingarten** and **Jeff Gordinier** collect tributes to female musicians in *Here She Comes Now* (Rare Bird). **Bryan Denson** exposes *The Spy’s Son* (Atlantic Monthly Press). **Willie Nelson** stays cool in *It’s a Long Story* (Little, Brown). —E.S.



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Marin Hopper, mother Brooke Hayward, and daughter Violet.

A lineup of Slim clutches (named for Slim Keith, Marin's step-grandmother).

Hayward foldovers; a painting of Leland Hayward; a Hayward foldover box bag; a plate clutch.

The clubby atmosphere of Hayward House, in N.Y.C.

Clutching Memories

When Marin Hopper, daughter of Dennis Hopper and Brooke Hayward, discovered a trove of her grandfather's papers at the New York Public Library a few summers ago, she knew she had hit upon the DNA of her accessories brand, **Hayward**. Among agent and

producer Leland Hayward's belongings were color slides of his chic family's travels and telegrams from Ernest Hemingway. Marin has always been steeped in style; her grandmother was movie star Margaret Sullivan and her step-grandmother was Best-Dressed Hall of Famer Slim Keith. At 21, Marin took a job at *Vogue*, and eventually she became *Elle's*

fashion director. In 2008, she launched a Hayward handbag line, limiting her business to custom orders. "I felt encouraged to translate our family story into merchandise," she reflects. From her grandfather's signature watch fob, Marin derived her bags' "H" hardware. ("I used to wear that fob as a necklace," Brooke Hayward says.) And she named

her designs after relatives: a clutch, for example, is called the "Slim." These elegant items are now available at Hayward House, a New York flagship whose bathroom is lined in wallpaper representing Marin's prolifically tangled family tree. "We are rooted deep in America," she says. "Our story is wonderfully true, and I'm renewing it." —AMY FINE COLLINS

Beachy Keen

A farmstand in the lobby, a fleet of Tesla electric vehicles, and 100 percent organic linens: **1 Hotel South Beach** in Miami Beach, Florida, is the ultimate eco-friendly oasis. And its debut marks Barry Sternlicht's latest step in revolutionizing the hotel industry. "I call it 'the luxury of enough,'" says Sternlicht, who birthed W Hotels. "It's very comfortable, but not ridiculous. It will be refreshing." (Two more 1 Hotels will open, in N.Y.C., by the end of the year, and an additional 12 are in the pipeline worldwide.) In Miami Beach, Sternlicht worked with property co-owner Richard LeFrak and tapped design studio Meyer Davis to transform a 17-story landmark on Collins Avenue built in 1925, through the use of woods, stones, and organic textiles. The décor is just one part of the all-green, all-serene experience that guests can expect. The 426 rooms—each a spacious 700 square feet, on average—come with Triple-Clear water filters, hemp-blend-filled Keetsa mattresses, terrariums, yoga mats, and meditation guides (there's an app for that on the in-room tablet). Plus: the hotel's three restaurants will be helmed by farm-to-table maestro Tom Colicchio, in his Miami debut. —JAMES REGINATO

1 Hotel's rooftop pool cabanas.

Brooks Brothers



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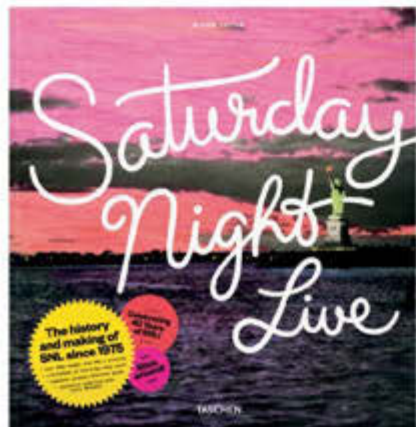


ALISON CASTLE, MARY ELLEN MATTHEWS,
EDIE BASKIN, AND CREED POULSON

READ

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GIVE

Best Friends Animal Society

Best Friends Animal Society is the only national animal-welfare organization focused exclusively on ending the killing of animals in America's shelters. Best Friends runs the nation's largest no-kill sanctuary for companion animals, as well as lifesaving programs across the country. Since its founding, in 1984, Best Friends has helped reduce the number of animals killed in shelters nationwide from 17 million per year to about 4 million. Together, we can Save Them All. Learn more at bestfriends.org.



GIVE

Hummingbirds

The Hummingbirds Foundation encourages women to foster community and sisterhood through philanthropy. Groups, or "charms," are formed in an effort to raise money for programs that benefit women and children around the world. Currently, Hummingbirds is funding a community center in Haiti and an outdoor play space for an inner-city elementary school in Los Angeles. What makes Hummingbirds unique is that 100 percent of every contribution goes directly to the programs, and groups are able to visit their donation sites. For more information, contact hummingbirds1a@icloud.com.



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Clockwise from left: Gavin and Robert Paisley, photographed in their workshop, on the edge of the Ashdown Forest, in East Sussex, England; a London cityscape; a Hoover Building model; Gavin and Robert.



inding a great present for the person who has everything is tough. The gift has to be cool, unique, personalized, original, and so forth. Ever thought of an architectural model? Or, more specifically, a small, plaster version of a favorite house or building? It might just be that the British-based company Chisel & Mouse has created the holy grail of fancy gift giving.

In 2011, brothers **Robert** and **Gavin Paisley** decided they were done with their business “developing back-office systems software.” (In fairness, who wouldn’t be?) “We were desperate to make something with our hands,” says Gavin. The duo set about choosing a new creative business and hit the jackpot with architectural-model-making, using both traditional plaster-cast methods (hence “Chisel”) and modern 3-D printing and computer-aided design (CAD) technology (hence “Mouse”).

They set up the Chisel & Mouse studio in the equally charmingly named village of Nutley, on the edge of the Ashdown Forest (medieval hunting grounds that were the inspiration for Hundred Acre Wood, where A. A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh stories are set). From here, the Paisley boys work on both elements of the Chisel & Mouse business: a collection of models based on popular landmarks and buildings—including London’s Hoover Building, Miami’s Century Hotel, and New York’s Guggenheim Museum—and the bespoke angle, working with clients to make an any-size maquette of their own

home, favorite architectural structure, or even an entire section of a much-loved city. For both practices, they work together to develop CAD drawings, referencing photographs and Google Earth, and using satellite data and architectural drawings—never needing to see the building itself. Then traditional and fiddly plaster-cast modeling techniques using rubber molds are employed to create the finished product.

Despite this creative process, the brothers don’t see themselves as artists. “I like to think we’ve chosen a nice aspect and created something that’s stylish,” says Gavin. “But we wouldn’t presume to think of ourselves as artists,” Robert adds, “We call ourselves draftsmen; the architect is the artist.” However, some may disagree, as these often familiar buildings are transformed into objects with inherent beauty, abstracted to a degree thanks to the smooth, white surface of the plaster.

And beyond beauty, these maquettes can multi-task: Chisel & Mouse will slice buildings in half to create bookends, mount architectural structures on Perspex to be hung on a wall, or incorporate entire cityscapes into tables that display them beneath glass. “I love the idea of immortalizing a place that’s special to people,” says Robert. And the feeling is shared. For those whose houses are so special that they want to look at a model of them, even when they’re inside, well, they love Chisel & Mouse. (chiselandmouse.com)

—ALICE B-B

Private Lives

CHISEL & MOUSE

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Designer Oscar de la Renta with models Karlie Kloss (left) and Daria Strokous during September 2014 Fashion Week in New York.



Shining Star

Extraordinary," a superlative often used by the late **Oscar de la Renta**, has aptly been chosen as the name for his new eau de parfum. The designer was able to see this project through from its inception—the pale-pink juice made from plush peonies and neroli oil, with woody and vanilla notes—to its completion, with the design of the star-shaped crystal flacon. **Extraordinary** was conceived for women who live their lives in like manner—with great passion, confidence, and style. (90 ml. for \$92; oscarde la renta.com) —SUNHEE GRINNELL

Head Space

The new, 3,500-square-foot **Nexus** salon, in Tribeca, N.Y.C., headed by its global hair creative director, **Kevin Mancuso**, offers an expansive precision hair-treatment system in addition to signature cuts. Think *Star Trek* meets style. (nexus.com) —SHG



The Nexus salon, in Tribeca, N.Y.C.

Beauty



In Full Bloom

Inspired by a childhood memory of walking in Normandy near the sea, **Christiane Gautrot**, one of the founders of the Parisian perfumer **Diptyque**, desired a scent featuring apple blossoms, coffee beans, and the sea breeze. Taking visual cues from photographer **Terri Weifenbach's** whimsical book *Lana*, the brand's creative director, **Myriam Badault**, and perfumer **Fabrice Pellegrin** brought Gautrot's dream to life with the fragrant **Florabellio**, out this month. (1.7 oz. for \$90; diptyqueparis.com) —LENORA JANE ESTES

Hot Looks

Orlane

Teint Absolu
Perfect any complexion with this second-skin-like treatment foundation. (\$70; orlane.com)



Julien Farel

Magnifique Fortifying Serum
Get fuller-looking hair with this anti-aging leave-in serum. (\$95; julienfarel.com)



Dr. Brandt

Cellusculpt
Shape the body, smooth and firm the skin, with this cellulite-reducing cream. (\$59; drbrandt.skincare.com)



Lancôme

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An ingenious double-action pen-on-the-go. (\$36; lancome-usa.com)



Bobbi Brown

Limited Edition Cheek Palette
Make cheeks pop in Berry. (\$45; bobbibrown.cosmetics.com)



—SHG

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PAPARAZZI-PALOOZA

This year's *Vanity Fair* Oscar party, the 21st to date, was about as good as it gets. Held in a custom-designed structure ensconced between the Wallis Annenberg Center for the Performing Arts and the landmarked Beverly Hills City Hall, the glamorous soirée was set against a backdrop steeped in Southern California history. A collection of illustrious guests and friends of the magazine gathered for cocktails and an intimate dinner prepared by the inimitable chef Thomas Keller. Cozy elegance gave way to revelry as Oscar winners, starlets, comedians, moguls, Silicon Valley whizzes, all-star athletes, Grammy winners, and supermodels shimmied, sipped, sauntered, and shook more than just hands at the most famous party of the year.

—PUNCH HUTTON



Paparazzi

Alejandro
González
IñárrituWhitney
Cummings,
Kate Upton,
and Leslie
MannAmy
Adams



Above and right, Solange Knowles and Beyoncé.



Jony Ive and J.J. Abrams



Emma Stone



Miles Teller and Channing Tatum



Harvey Weinstein and Georgina Chapman



Chrissy Teigen and John Legend



Jessica Chastain



Reese Witherspoon



Shane Smith, Don Rickles, and Jimmy Buffett



Oprah Winfrey

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Ron Howard



Monica Lewinsky



Jennifer Lopez



Brett Ratner and Miley Cyrus



Chadwick Boseman, Lupita Nyong'o, and David Oyelowo



Sacha Baron Cohen and Jason Bateman



Brian Grazer and Rupert Murdoch



Julianne Moore



John Currin, John McEnroe, Rachel Feinstein, and Anne Stringfield

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Karl Lagerfeld
and
Joan
Smalls



Common



Naomi
Watts,
Joan
Collins,
and
Jackie
Collins



Alejandro González
Iñárritu and
Michael Keaton

Sam
Taylor-
Johnson



Judd Apatow
and Bill Maher



Brad
and
Cassandra Grey



Francis
Ford
Coppola



Steve Martin with
wife Anne Stringfield
and Fran Lebowitz.



Patricia Clarkson
and Jennifer
Aniston

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What You Should Know About

JIM PARSONS

A PANOPLY OF ECCENTRIC BIOGRAPHICAL DATA RE: BROADWAY'S VOICE OF GOD

Jim Parsons is the warm, well-mannered, Houston-raised gent who, at 42, has spent the past eight years atop CBS's prime-time-pummeling sitcom *The Big Bang Theory*. The show's record-breaking ratings are in large part thanks to the self-described theater geek, who makes his physicist character, Sheldon Cooper, endearing in spite of a social aversion, a *Star Trek* obsession, and a superiority complex. (You try charming nearly 20 million viewers with a smarty-pants line about Newton's gravitational constant.) His work has led to four Emmys, one Golden Globe, and a trio of Broadway roles—the latest being in *An Act of God*, the humorous one-act play written by *The Daily Show* with *Jon Stewart* alum David Javerbaum, which opens on May 28 at Studio 54. In anticipation of his upcoming stage project, and *The Big Bang Theory*'s season finale next month, a scroll of certainties about the face of America's favorite comedy series.

HIS SECRET acting weapons are note cards, on which he has handwritten Sheldon's dense scientific dialogue for each of the 180 or so episodes. For *An Act of God*, Parsons guesses he is memorizing about 200 cards of divine dialogue (his character delivers God's word), some containing "the tiniest serial-killer" scrawl.

HIS I.Q. is classified information, known only by his mother, who had Parsons tested in the first or second grade and did not consider it appropriate to share the results with her son. But Sheldon's I.Q., 187, is public knowledge.

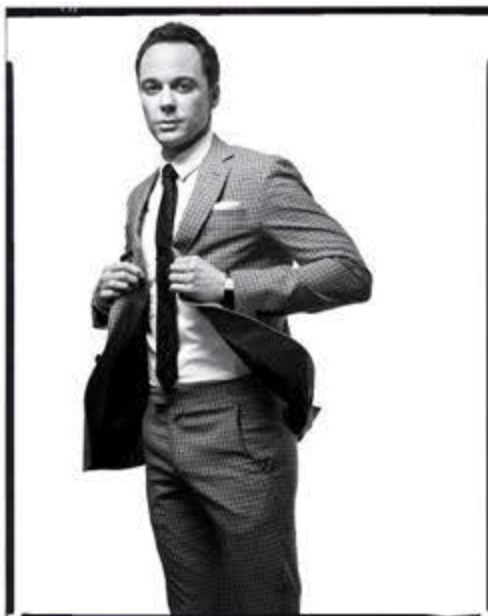
HIS MOTHER, Judy, and his three-years-younger sister, Julie, teach the same first-grade class—his mother in the morning, and his sister in the afternoon—in the Texas district where Parsons attended school.

IN TRIBUTE to his late father, Milton, the former president of a plumbing-supply company who died in a car accident in 2001, Parsons traced his paternal ancestry, discovering that his sixth-great-grandfather was Louis-François Trouard, the architect to King Louis XV of France.

HE HAS homes in his two favorite cities, Los Angeles and New York, which he shares with his partner of about 13 years, graphic designer Todd Spiewak, and two dogs—Otis, a Maltese, and Rufus, a Shih Tzu. **HE AND** Todd met on a blind date in New York City that involved billiards and karaoke—the latter of which Parsons hates.

"That's something I've robbed Todd of in this relationship—that no one will go with him to karaoke."

A DNA test was ordered for Otis after nearly a decade of suspicions that he was not a full-blooded Maltese. The results showed that Otis not only is purebred but also has impressive lineage. "We both felt



JIM ALMIGHTY
Parsons,
photographed
in Los Angeles.

like 'Pardon *us*—we had no idea you were royalty, and we were insulting you by calling you a mixed breed all these years.'"

HE PURCHASED his L.A. home in 2014, in the Los Feliz neighborhood, from Robert Pattinson, which made for interesting online headlines. "The way that it came out on the Internet, it sounds like I took over a bag of money to Robert Pattinson and said, 'I'd like to buy your house.' That is not what happened."

HIS PREFERRED online news source is *The New York Times*, and although he has never joined the ranks of Internet commenters, "Jesus God in heaven, is it tempting to join the circus sometimes."

HEAVEN FOR Parsons is an early bedtime, ideally beginning at eight P.M. with an hour of reading, then lights out at nine P.M.—even if it has earned him the nickname "Grandpa." "It does tend to make people refer to you as a geriatric when you are keeping hours that would

make the retirement community blush."

UPON RISING at four or five A.M., his morning routine involves several cups of coffee (with Coffee-mate and stevia), a protein drink, oatmeal, and then a four- or five-

mile run on the treadmill, plus training sessions three times a week.

ON NEW Year's Day 2007, Parsons indulged in his last libation: a beer, "something respectable and amber in hue," at the Spotted Pig, in Manhattan. At that point, Parsons had filmed a pilot for *The Big Bang Theory*, but CBS had not yet picked it up. Feeling stuck in "a gray confusing place," he decided to quit tipling to find focus: "Whether I was drinking to excess or not, drinking only makes foggy things foggier."

HE CONSIDERS himself "a huge Lena Dunham fan"—his fondness grew while following her Instagram feed and escalated once he watched her HBO series, *Girls*.

A SPORTS enthusiast and Fantasy Football player (his last team name was Rufus Barks), Parsons is pen pals with Canadian professional tennis player Genie Bouchard. Last summer, she invited Parsons to London to watch her play at Wimbledon. He sat with her mom and her coach. In turn, Parsons hosted Bouchard on *The Big Bang Theory* set, in L.A.

GROWING UP on the Gulf Coast, Parsons was so interested in meteorology that he had a favorite weatherman (Neil Frank) and followed 1983's Hurricane Alicia coverage with great fascination. When he arrived at the University of Houston—before earning an M.F.A. from the University of San Diego—he enrolled in a meteorology class and failed. Not because he couldn't handle the subject, the TV scientist is quick to point out, but because he had already gravitated toward a theater company and did not go to class. "It was just like, 'You know what? I found my passion already.'"

—JULIE MILLER

"I FOUND MY
PASSION."

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Out to Lunch with

KELSEY GRAMMER

BACK ON BROADWAY IN *FINDING NEVERLAND*, THE STAR TALKS ABOUT LIFE AFTER TRAGEDY

Kelsey Grammer met me for lunch at one of his favorite restaurants, Nobu Fifty Seven, the Japanese mecca in Midtown Manhattan. “Good to see you,” he said, shaking my hand. “Kelsey.”

This relaxed, instantly likable man has been among the most recognizable figures in America since his phenomenal two decades playing the endearingly know-all shrink Dr. Frasier Crane on *Cheers* and *Frasier*. (Even his voice—as Sideshow Bob, on *The Simpsons*—is celebrated.) He knows the Nobu menu well. “The food here makes me very happy,” he said, ordering first courses for us to share. “May I have a double order of the yellowtail jalapeño? No garlic,” he asked the waiter. “Fantastic! And then an order of scallop tiradito, and four pieces of sea-urchin sashimi. How about a rock-shrimp tempura? Great! That will do it. And a tuna-sashimi salad. I think we’re good. Thanks, man.”

“You’re welcome,” said the waiter.

Mr. Grammer was rehearsing *Finding Neverland*, the new Broadway musical about J. M.

Barrie and four of the boys who inspired *Peter Pan* (opening April 15 at the Lunt-Fontanne Theatre). He doesn’t enjoy rehearsing as much as most, though. “I like audiences and performing and, you know . . . applause!” The show marks the debut of movie mogul Harvey Weinstein as a marquee theater producer, and Mr. Grammer plays the pivotal role of Charles Frohman, the American theater producer of the original 1904 *Peter Pan*. “You’re the Harvey Weinstein of the period,” I suggested.

“Exactly! I told Harvey that I’m playing him! Maybe a little more refined, I don’t know.” At which he laughed good-naturedly. “I think this thing could run forever!” he said, admitting he’s an optimist by nature. “It has a great story, and it’s very uplifting and emotional. I defy anyone to have a dry eye at the end of the first and second acts.”

Mr. Grammer was about to turn 60. “It feels better than 40 did!” I mentioned that he used to be every tabloid’s dream with all the public dramas of his three former marriages and various scandals following him everywhere like prior convictions. “You know, there is a tide in the affairs of men,” he replied, quoting Brutus’s homily to eternal hope from *Julius Caesar*. He laughed again (and it’s catching). “I’ve learned to soldier on.”

And the tide has turned for the better. Four years ago, he married a British woman, Kayte Walsh, who’s in her mid-30s, and they live happily with their two children—he has six children in all—in Holmby Hills, L.A., and in New York City. “This lovely young woman lit up my world and changed my heart, which was a bit calloused and hardened against a lot of things. And we are good, and I feel young and alive.”



By JOHN HEILPERN

the parole board. “I was her big brother. I was supposed to protect her—I could not. . . . It very nearly destroyed me.”

“But you were only 20. You weren’t even living in Colorado,” I said. “How could you have protected her?”

“It’s hard to explain. It’s not rational. But it happens anyway. I know a lot of people who’ve lost their siblings and blame themselves.” When he was able to let his guilt go after many years, he began to recover, though the hurt remains.

“I’m extremely sorry to dwell on this,” I apologized. “No, it’s all right,” he replied quietly. Almost a year ago, he successfully opposed another appeal from Glenn for parole. “I accept that you actually live with remorse every day of your life, but I live with tragedy every day of mine,” Grammer told him via video during the hearing. “I accept your apology. I forgive you. However, I cannot give your release my endorsement. To give that a blessing would be a betrayal of my sister’s life.”

He explained to me that he forgave him because he was convinced of his contrition for the first time. Then he added with calm, deepest emotion, “But I believe the gift of life and freedom he took from my sister precludes him from ever being allowed to enjoy that gift for himself. He took her future from her with no regard for her whatsoever. He assumed he had a right to do so. He assumed she was his property, and that the precious gift God gave her was his to take.”

What, if anything, has Kelsey Grammer learned from all this? “That every one of us is going to experience some terrible loss. I just got a big dose. For every story you hear that’s tragic, there’s another that’s equally tragic or more so. I think you come to look at it as part of life.” □

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SOLDIER ON.”



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analyzing their own
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THE SWEET SMELL OF DISGRACE

A year of media scandals, reaching twin peaks with the Brian Williams and Bill O'Reilly uproars, has put journalism's major sins on display: plagiarism, confabulation, gullibility—and Schadenfreude

Unless it's something involving Hillary Clinton that gets them heaving, nothing primes the gastric juices of journalists quite like a scandal among their own—then it's feeding time at the Olive Garden. Journalists seem to get off far more on the high-profile foul-ups in their profession than on the feats of accomplishment, but scattered boos have always carried more freight through the air than congratulatory cheers. Any egregious act of malfeasance or old-fashioned screwup is attended by the usual creaky production of public seppuku: yippee-ki-yay cries of Schadenfreude from the usual rodeo hands on the Internet; frownish ponderings from pundits, journalism professors, and op-ed writers on the erosion of supervision, accountability, and trust in this untamed disco-fever digital landscape; internal investigations whose findings are delivered with the wounded pride of a bandaged eagle; and, a few years later, after nearly everybody except bleary-eyed pros have forgotten, the inevitable memoir or autobiographical novel by the reformed perp (Jayson Blair, Stephen Glass) on how personal insecurity, yearning ambition, and a competitive environment led to a life of weasel deception. The last year or so has yielded a bountiful harvest of journalistic scandals, some of them real doozies. For me, the determining factors in the fascination value of a scandalabro are the picture window into human nature it affords and the scale, audacity, and frequency of the deception or bungle. Anyone can mess up once, twice, but serial offenders are putting some oomph into it.

Promiscuous copycats, for example. To plagiarize once may be a cut-and-paste oversight, a failure to hang quotation marks where they belong (Carol Vogel, an arts writer at *The New York Times*, was reprimanded for purloining part of a Wikipedia entry on a Renaissance painter—she took a buyout from the paper several months later);

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to persist at it like some kind of fiendish magpie falls into a subdivision of psychopathology. With Internet search engines and plagiarism-spotting software such as SNITCH (an acronym for Spotting and Neutralizing Internet Theft by Cheaters) and iThenticate, rampant text theft would seem trickier to pull off than back in olden, dusty-volumed days when 19th-century author Thomas De Quincey could pilfer extensive passages from obscure untranslated sources. Yet certain plagiarists are able to get away with it in

had committed around 40 instances of plagiarism in his clickbait endeavors. BuzzFeed properly sent Johnson packing, but he was soon salvaged by the conservative National Review Online and hired as its digital director, a multiple plagiarist actually being a quality step up from the racially problematic writers (John Derbyshire, Robert Weissberg) N.R.O. had published and pushed out the pod-bay door in recent years.

Journalism once carried a cocky swagger as a cynical enterprise, a legacy of

superb political theater, but wind began to whistle through cracks in the story with an exhaustive investigation by Cathy Young in the *Daily Beast* documenting that the case against the student's alleged rapist was shakier and more riddled with question marks and evidentiary problems than it appeared in the J'accuse! furor. While Young's reporting didn't exonerate the accused attacker, it cast into doubt any certitude regarding slam-dunk guilt.

THE NEWS-MEDIA LANDSCAPE IS BEING SO FLATTENED THAT IT'S RUNNING OUT OF FIGURES TO STEAMROLLER.

spades until finally nabbed, their extensive paper and pixel trails then retraced. Last year CNN fired a news editor in its London bureau, Marie-Louise Gumuchian, for plagiarism, the follow-up investigation finding pickpocket fingerprints on about 50 of her stories. Perhaps what I mentioned above about pathological compulsions is mistaken, passé. When you plagiarize that prolifically, it's unclear whether you're even trying to put something over on readers; perhaps it becomes part of the modus operandi, a laborsaving device. "Here's a noteworthy aspect of this case: CNN received no complaints about the plagiarism, according to a CNN source," Erik Wemple reported in *The Washington Post*.

Face it, most readers are oblivious. Nevertheless, Gumuchian was canned, whereas complaints of plagiarism against much, much loftier byliners have barely made a divot in their lustrous nimbuses. Fareed Zakaria, geopolitical savant, was suspended by CNN and *Time* magazine for plagiarizing a piece about gun control and has been wrist-slapped for a handful of similar petty thefts, yet, as David Uberti observed in his November 2014 *Columbia Journalism Review* roundup of the record, "Zakaria appears in no danger of losing his prestigious jobs." Perhaps it is because, along with his other suave, assured attributes, Zakaria enjoys the magical immunity of having Great Hair—those with Great Hair (see also the sporadically embattled popularizer Malcolm Gladwell) seem to receive a special dispensation for their journalistic brand. It's just a theory, don't hold me to it. Our Bad Media scored better big-game success in its takedown of BuzzFeed's viral-politics editor, Benny Johnson, who

those crackling, bustling, flashbulb-popping tabloid movies such as *Five Star Final* and *His Girl Friday*, corrosive X-rays such as *Sweet Smell of Success* and *Ace in the Hole*, and the hovering, presiding smirk of H. L. Mencken, debunker supreme. Cynicism, unattractive in the sour extreme, at least curbs the susceptibility to fall for a story because it seems so chewy. *New York* magazine got gulled when it hailed a high-school senior named Mohammed Islam, who racked up \$72 million as an investor, which turned out to be a complete air ball. The teenager had only done simulated trades in his investment club—his real-world returns were vapor. At least that was a relatively harmless bit of urban legend, but two guttier stories did considerable damage after their credibility crumpled because both concerned a land-mined subject with little margin for error: sexual assault on campus. *Rolling Stone* had to partially retract and profusely apologize for a traumatic account of a frat-house gang rape at the University of Virginia ("A Rape on Campus," November 2014) after follow-up reporting by *The Washington Post* found discrepancies, mistakes, and significant holes in the original story. Failure to interview major parties in the events of that evening at the frat house and its aftermath resulted in an excess of faith in the alleged victim's story that proved to be grievously unwise. A similar media dynamic seized hold in the sister case of the Columbia University student who carried her mattress around campus as performance art for the failure of the administration to expel her alleged rapist, whom she accused of being a serial assaulter; in solidarity, fellow students demonstrated by lugging mattresses and raising them to form a wall. It made for

When it comes to eating-their-own-media frenzies, the full piranha-tank thrash, nothing can compete with the classic tale of a marquee name brought low. It is where narrative meets archetype, and hubris, not mere incompetence or crafty deception, is the cause of the undoing. (Or as Gore Vidal immortally put it, "It looks as if our old friend Hugh Bris is back in town.") The most absorbing double feature of 2015's media melodramas has been the false-memory kerflooey of Brian Williams, the anchor and managing editor of *NBC Nightly News*, and Bill O'Reilly, the host of *The O'Reilly Factor*, on Fox News, and co-author of a best-selling series of amped-up historical narratives that are like Classics Illustrated comics for adult lip-readers. Williams and O'Reilly share height (Williams is a stately six feet one inch, O'Reilly an intimidating six feet four inches) and hefty success in their respective starships but temperamentally and presentationally toil on opposite sides of the street. With his purling voice and engraved phrasing, Williams laid the gravitas inflections down neat at the news anchor desk and, a master of smooth tonal shifts, proved himself a droll, ironic presence as a favored late-night talk-show guest, the personification of medium cool. Then there's O'Reilly, the perpetual, rumpled hothead. He can butter on the noblesse oblige when it suits him, but it takes about 10 seconds of pushback from a guest, journalist, or professional smart aleck (the pre-senatorial Al Franken, for example) for O'Reilly to activate his vengeance-is-mine mode, acting as if he possessed gnarly Liam Neeson skills that could utterly destroy an ovenful of gingerbread men. ("I am coming after you with everything I have," he promised a *New York Times* reporter who was looking into his record as a war correspondent during the Falklands War.)

Where the unraveling of Williams rests upon a few, repeated confabulations, their ramifications reported at length elsewhere in this issue, O'Reilly is being castigated as a serial exaggerator and self-glorifier, his blowhard exploits extending over numerous battlefields, foreign and domestic. O'Reilly has posed himself at the red-hot heart of action in the eyewitness yarns he's spun for years. He claimed he covered the Falklands



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ANOTHER WAY to NEVERLAND



“There never was a cockier boy,” wrote J. M. Barrie in Chapter Three of *Peter and Wendy*, the novel of 1911 that grew from his play of 1904, *Peter Pan*. The chapter is called “Come Away, Come Away!,” and that’s what the screenwriter Jason Fuchs (who is also writing 2017’s *Wonder Woman*) and director Joe Wright (*Atonement*, *Anna Karenina*) have done in the upcoming film *Pan*, a fresh take on the children’s classic. Though its narrative includes Peter as a baby, *Pan* is less a prequel (as has been suggested) than it is a fantasia on the theme of *Peter Pan*. “It’s a reimagining,” says Wright, who read Fuchs’s script in one sitting, loved its exuberance, and met with Warner Bros. the following day.

Wright knew the book from his own childhood and remembers “being quite freaked out by the images and ideas. It’s not like most other children’s books; it has a total honesty and goes to quite unusual places.” Which meant that he had to go there, too. *Pan* has afforded Wright an enormous canvas, with room for intoxicating imaginative play. “There’s something kind of Psychedelic Baroque about the movie,” he says, “its visual expression.” Of the young actor Levi Miller, who plays Peter, Wright says, “The light in his eyes comes from the light in his heart.” And of Hugh Jackman as Blackbeard: “He’s extraordinary in the movie—wicked and damaged and beautiful.” The scene where Peter and his friends, asleep in a London orphanage, are snatched up through skylights by three dozen pirates who bungee-jump from an airborne ship, “that sequence feels like a big moment in my cinematic development,” says Wright, “the sort of thing I never would have tried before.” It’s the spell of *Peter Pan*, perhaps, forever urging one to fly.

—LAURA JACOBS

The stars of *Pan*—Garrett Hedlund as Hook, Levi Miller as Peter Pan, Hugh Jackman as Blackbeard, and Rooney Mara as Tiger Lily—photographed on the film’s set outside London.

War in 1982 when in actuality he arrived in Buenos Aires just before Argentina surrendered to Margaret Thatcher’s indomitable spirit—he never set foot on the contested islands. Covering the riots in Los Angeles following the police beating of Rodney King, O’Reilly came under aerial bombardment from protesters hurling bricks and stones—“Concrete was raining down on us,” he recalled. His former colleagues at TV’s *Inside Edition* dismiss this as a phantasm. O’Reilly also gave the hardened impression that he had seen nuns murdered in El Salvador and terror bombings during the Irish Troubles, only to backtrack when challenged years later and concede that he had only seen images of the violence, not the real thing live and in bleeding color. Time and again Bill O’Reilly had arrived late for his rendezvous with history, only to insist he had been there when something heavy went down.

Unlike Williams, who was suspended for six months without pay, O’Reilly so far hasn’t been reprimanded by his employer, or even received a stern finger-wag, and why would he? His ratings have been up since the ruckus broke, hardly a surprise, because O’Reilly functions as the angry white male’s apoplexy supplier and his average viewer is Grampa Simpson, shaking his fist at a cloud.

However these last two soap operas play out, they seem like the end of an era, the last twilight of big-ticket, high-visibility anchor-brows in the dinosaur diorama. The news-media landscape is being so flattened, atomized, listicled, aggregated, and accelerated that it’s running out of prominent figures and familiar landmarks to steamroller, lurching toward the idiocracy that writer-director Mike Judge prophesied in the movie of the same name. The media uproars of the future probably won’t be rooted in individual arrogance and irresponsibility, or institutional sloppy practices, but in collective manias (traffic-stopping llamas, dress-color debates) fed and inflamed by search-engine algorithms that have no more conscience than cancer cells. Not what any of us signed up for, but all we can do is persevere. □

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The LEWIS and DAVID EXPEDITION

Comedians Larry David and Richard Lewis share a bromance. They were born three days apart on the same floor of the same hospital in Brooklyn, and they met each other at age 12 when they were attending the same summer camp in upstate New York. They reconnected as rising

comics on the 70s stand-up circuit and have been close friends ever since, with Lewis having appeared frequently on David's HBO series, *Curb Your Enthusiasm*. (Lewis will play a psychiatrist this summer on Seth MacFarlane's *Starz* comedy show, *Blunt Talk*.) The following appreciation is adapted from Larry David's foreword to Lewis's new volume of collected nuggets of wisdom, *Reflections from Hell*, illustrated by Carl Nicholas Titolo (*Powerhouse Books*), out next month.

Here's a good piece of advice: If you should ever have the misfortune of crossing paths with Richard Lewis, do not—I repeat, DO NOT—give him your personal information. No address, phone number, e-mail—especially e-mail. Nothing! If he asks you for it (and he will) and you can't think of a quick excuse, just say no, you'd rather not. Be prepared, though—he'll be hurt. He'll tell you he's devastated. He loves that word. He uses it a lot. That's how he got me to write this [foreword to his new book]. He asked me, I turned him down, and he told me he was devastated. In a moment of weakness, I caved. So stay strong. Don't succumb. Because, if you do, your life will never be the same.

You'll wake up every morning to a barrage of e-mails. It's actually the closest thing to spam that's not spam. You'll get constant updates as to what he's doing and with whom he's doing it. Press clippings, reviews, tweets, aphorisms, and ruminations on his life and death. And what you perceive to be private e-mails will have actually been copied to 50 other people. All in all, you'll begin to dread

Reflections from Hell: Richard Lewis' Guide on How Not to Live, by Richard Lewis; illustrations by Carl Nicholas Titolo; foreword by Larry David; edited and with a preface by Christopher Murray; to be published next month by Powerhouse Books; © 2015 by the author.



Thirtysomethings
Richard Lewis and
Larry David, with
a colony of Bunnies,
at the Playboy Club
in Los Angeles
in the early 1980s.

that little bell going off on your phone. You will conveniently forget to charge it and start leaving it at home.

There are also calls—lots of them. Within a week or two, mark my words, he will turn you into a screener. He knows this, which is why he changed to “Unknown Number.” Well, it's not unknown anymore. It's him. If

you don't take the call—and I urge you not to—he will then leave a message, which will be so long that he will invariably get cut off, at which point he will call you back and very likely get cut off again. Soon your voice-mail box will be filled up and you won't be able to get any messages, even important ones. Knowing him could cost you a job, a relationship, and quite possibly your life.

Many of these messages will be him badgering you to get together. When you finally give in—and very few humans can resist the onslaught—you will receive another bombardment of calls and e-mails, reminding you of date, time, and place. You'll assure him you've already confirmed this multiple times, and then a few hours later... voilà!

When you do finally meet, a few things will become apparent during your encounter. First is his excessive use of the word “shrink,” which he uses as often as teens use the word “like.” It's almost a tic. It will also dawn on you, perhaps during dessert, that you haven't uttered a word. Maybe a few “uh-huh”s, but that's it. And make sure to get extra napkins because he'll be using yours to write down new jokes, which occur with an almost alarming rapidity. Often you will notice he'll be staring at you with an odd look, until you realize he isn't really looking at you but at his reflection in the window behind you. You and all you possess, especially your clothing, will be mocked relentlessly and unmercifully, and when he leaves, you will be exhausted and will want to go right to bed. You will not be able to read or even watch television. I might add that you will also laugh. Possibly harder than you've ever laughed before. You will be in awe of how his synapses fire, how he observes life around him, how his brain sorts and compiles all the images it takes in. You might also notice how kind and sweet and generous he is.

—LARRY DAVID

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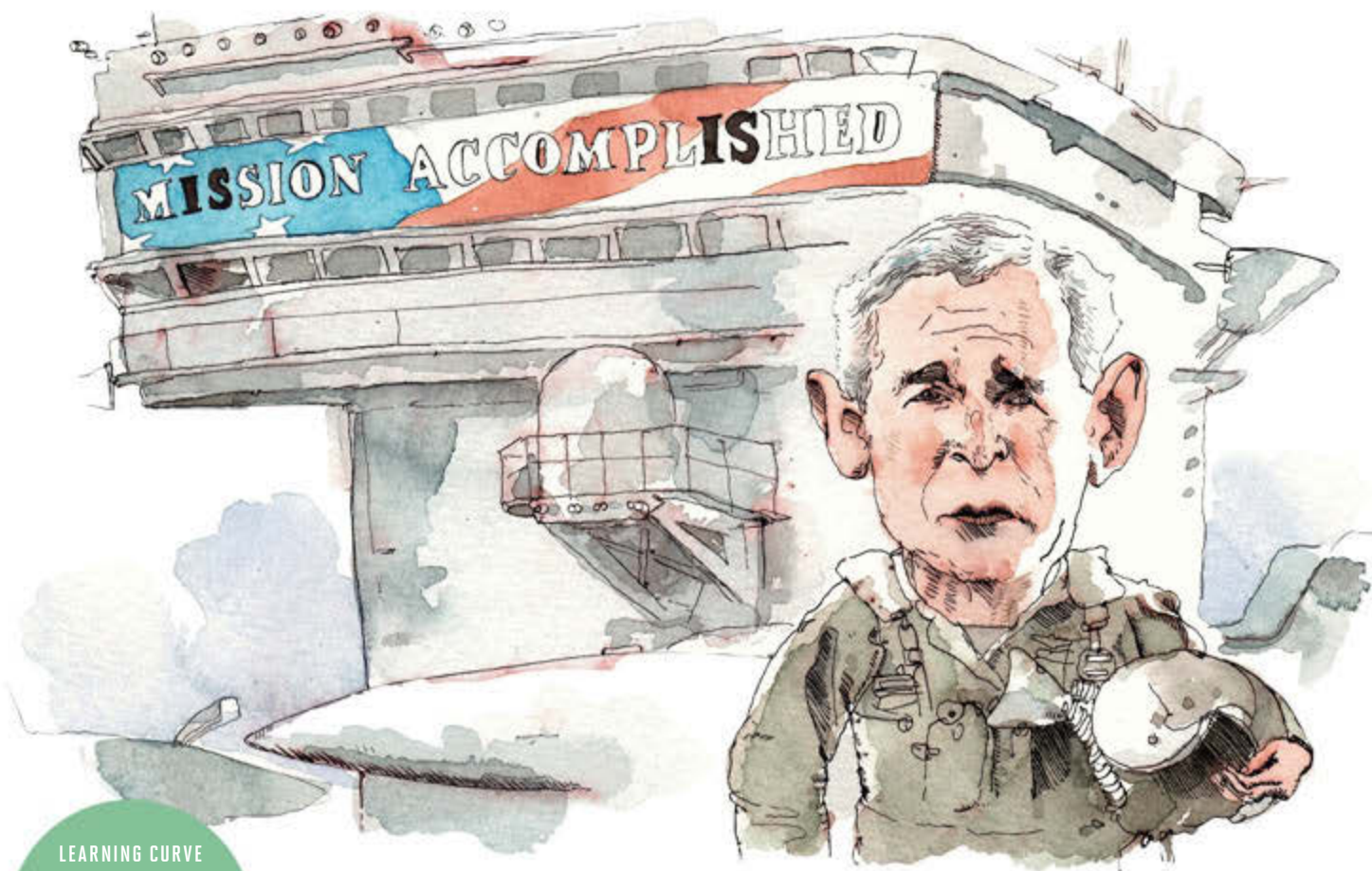
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THE AXIS OF ISIS

It's been a long quarter-century since the first President Bush put the U.S. on the road to an Iraq-Afghanistan quagmire. It's been barely a year since ISIS became a national obsession. As some call for another surge, let's remember what happened in between



LEARNING CURVE

Washington seems to forget that just about every smart idea for solving one problem creates some hideous new problem.

It has been an unbelievable 25 years since George H. W. Bush started us on the adventure that still isn't over in Iraq and Afghanistan. There are American soldiers fighting and dying in the Middle East right now who weren't even born when Bush the Elder declared the Iraqi invasion and occupation of Kuwait to be an intolerable situation and sent roughly half a million Americans halfway around the world to reverse it.

Twenty-five years down the road is not a bad moment to stop and ask, What the heck

was that all about? And what did we accomplish for our pains, especially the sacrifices of individual American soldiers? We now say "Thank you for your service" to anyone in a military uniform. This is a nice new civic custom that hasn't, to my surprise, turned into an interest-group free-for-all. What about policemen? And firemen? Or the immigrants who keep Southern California shiny? Aren't we grateful to them for their service? Sure, but we recognize that the military is different, and special. And I've never understood how

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it honors dead and wounded troops to perpetuate mistaken wars, in which their numbers can only increase.

Kuwait wasn't a democracy before Saddam Hussein's army marched in, in 1990, and Kuwait isn't really a democracy today. No doubt it's a nicer place to live than Iraq, either during the Saddam era or during the subsequent American protectorate. But then, immiserating the Iraqi people—making it hard for ordinary citizens to get food, energy, health care, and other staples of life—was a purposeful part of the American strategy. And that part worked. So did the part about getting rid of Saddam Hussein—the main goal of George the Younger's prosecution of the war.

The other goal, which had democracy spreading from Iraq to Saudi Arabia to Syria and beyond, never came close to being realized. Egypt bounced longtime ruler Hosni Mubarak and gave democracy a brief whirl around the dance floor but didn't care for the result, which was soon discarded in favor of more military rule. The Arab Middle East today offers various forms of government. There is "royalty" of dubious provenance, as in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait—generally pro-American but ungrateful and untrustworthy. There are strongmen, but they can be longevity-challenged. Some regimes last weeks, others last decades, and none is a totally reliable ally. Then there is government by no government: the chaos of anarchy punctuated by atrocities in places like Syria, Libya, and much of Iraq. What you don't find, a quarter-century after this experiment began, are many robust democracies in the region (except for the ones that were already there—Israel and Turkey). The violent groups, needless to say, don't care much for the United States and, in fact, have spent years quarreling over whether the proper target for terrorist acts is the Great Satan far away or the Little Satans closer by.

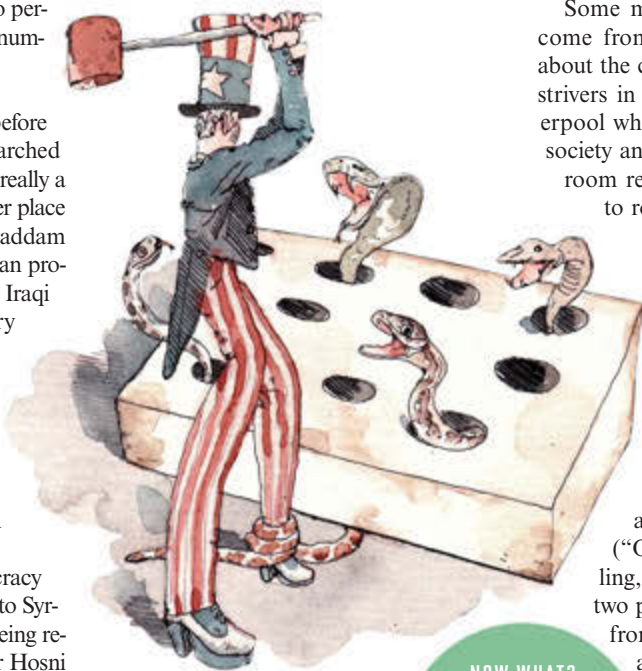
George Bush the Younger decided to finish the job his father had left half done and dispose of Saddam, not to mention find and destroy those famous weapons of mass destruction. Nothing better exposes the disingenuousness (or, at best, the confusion) of America's motives in the past 25 years than the palpable disappointment of Bush and his administration—notably Vice President Dick Cheney—at not finding weapons of mass destruction. Iraq's possession of chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons was supposed to be a bad thing, remember? If they had already been destroyed or never existed, then that was a good thing, right? Bush became so desperate to find weapons of mass destruction that, when a couple of suspicious mobile trailers turned up in northern Iraq,

he announced he'd found some at last, though we soon learned that the trailers were for making hydrogen to inflate artillery balloons.

Bush's eventual defense regarding the intelligence failures was basically "Look, everyone makes mistakes." Which is perfectly true and perfectly reasonable, actually. But if the war was a mistake, even an innocent or well-intentioned mistake, any justification for staying on and on has disappeared as well. More than a decade later, why are we still there? Max Boot, writing in *Time* magazine, used the word "credibility" to explain why we had to stay somewhere we never should have gone. I thought that, after Vietnam, we had pretty much killed that notion. But no, it's back.

And yes, the number of Americans in Iraq is relatively trivial, but President Obama has already agreed under pressure to increase troop levels, just long enough, you understand, to help wipe out the latest—and, seemingly, the worst—malefactor, the terrorist group known as ISIS.

Isis is merely the most recent in a parade of horrible groups, Shiite and Sunni, religious and secular, murderous and even more murderous, to which we have been introduced through the years. They sometimes are our friends, though secretly helping the other side, or they are sworn enemies of the imperialist aggressor (that is, us), but still secretly taking bribes from the C.I.A. They are often splinters from some larger tree, either "brand extension" by the original group or its sworn enemy due to ideological or religious differences that are impossible to fathom.



NOW WHAT?
As the ISIS threat spreads, it's worth remembering who created the conditions that allowed ISIS to thrive.

Some members of these groups even come from the West. The news article about the child of middle-class immigrant strivers in a place like Cleveland or Liverpool who inexplicably withdraws from society and spends his days locked in his room reading the Koran and listening to rock music, only to emerge and resurface at some border crossing, trying to join a radical group that believes in, oh, I dunno, human sacrifice perhaps—news articles like that have become a cliché by now. "He was such a quiet, polite boy," says a neighbor. "He used to write long love letters to Arianna Huffington and post them on Facebook." ("Of course I remember him, darling," says Arianna. "I had to hire two private guards to keep him away from me. But I gave him a blog anyhow. Why not?")

Where did ISIS come from? What ever happened to the other Middle East groups we used to know? Where is al-Qaeda? How about the Taliban? Does anyone remember the mujahideen? If you do, you're really showing your age. The mujahideen were the freedom fighters we armed and trained in order to drive the Soviets out of Afghanistan—a shrewd bank shot, everyone agreed, until, after the Soviets slunk away, we counted the leftover Stinger missiles in the freedom fighters' broom closet and realized that many were now in the hands of unfriendly elements. And a lot of the mujahideen had gone with them.

It may be hard to believe, now that the media are all-ISIS-all-the-time, but the first reference to ISIS in any major news outlet—at least the first one referring to the now notorious terrorist group and not to Lord Grantham's yellow Labrador, on *Downton Abbey*—was in the summer of 2013. This is not to criticize the media for being late to the party, or to suggest that the threat to Americans posed by ISIS is currently being exaggerated. It is merely to note that the number of analyses pouring out of Washington think tanks and experts available to CNN about who the heck these people are and what they want is pretty impressive, given that almost no one had heard of them a year ago. And it is also to note how fast the cast of characters in this drama can change, amid the anarchy we helped create—which is another reason not to leap to the assumption that anything further we might do would be of help.

Twenty-five years of this! And we were almost out of there when ISIS came along, through a door we opened to them in the first place. □



FOOTPRINTS
IN THE SAND
Dinesh D'Souza
on the beach near
his home, in La
Jolla, California,
in March.

THE RE-EDUCATION OF DINESH D'SOUZA

Once a wunderkind of the conservative elite, Dinesh D'Souza has made a fortune with increasingly wild-eyed books and documentaries, including one about Obama's "rage." Now serving time for campaign-finance fraud, D'Souza says he is being punished for his beliefs

By EVGENIA PERETZ

It was seven P.M., and Dinesh D'Souza—political pundit, writer, documentary-film maker, and onetime wunderkind of the intellectual elite—was dining in his new haunt: the Subway sandwich shop in National City, San Diego, a downtrodden Latino neighborhood about 20 miles from the Mexican border. He ordered his usual: six-inch whole-wheat sub with tuna salad and provolone. The girl making it was one step ahead of him. "He's one of my randoms," she said affectionately. Indeed, in his glasses, striped

sweater over a polo shirt, and clean sneakers, D'Souza looked as if he were heading for a start-up rollout event instead of a community confinement center a few minutes away, where he is serving an eight-month sentence during nighttime hours.

The rest of his evening would look something like this: He would check in to the confinement center at 7:57 P.M., three minutes before his 8 P.M. curfew. Certain that the Obama administration is waiting for him to slip up, he wouldn't risk being

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late, which is why he eats near the facility and not at his home, 20 miles away in La Jolla, where he is free to spend the day (though he may not leave the confines of San Diego County). Upon entering the center's fluorescent-lit, low-ceilinged building, situated across from a pungent recycling dump, he would be given a Breathalyzer test and patted down. He would join about 90 other residents, mostly Latino. After using one of the stalls of his communal bathroom, he would enter the open-plan

"I'll be on my bed. I'll hear four guys discussing the tits on the woman at Los Tacos. It will go on and on and on. I'm just powerless to move."

D'Souza reports on his new living situation with high energy and a matter-of-fact bemusement punctuated by an eager, slightly dorky laugh—which is odd, given his grim circumstances. Last May, he pleaded guilty to a campaign-finance violation after he was caught getting two straw donors to contribute to the campaign of his old friend Wendy

out Her—and companion documentaries for the last two, one of which grossed \$33 million, making it the highest-grossing political documentary after Michael Moore's *Fahrenheit 9/11*.

After the charges came down in January 2014, he cried "selective prosecution," a serious offense in which the government unfairly targets an individual—in this case, for political retribution. Alas, D'Souza didn't have evidence that the president, or Attorney General Eric Holder, or anyone else in the Justice Department, was out to get him. When he couldn't get the case thrown out on that basis, he pleaded guilty and claimed to take responsibility for his actions. The act might have earned him points with the judge, who had the discretion to ignore the sentencing guidelines (from 10 to 16 months of incarceration), but D'Souza seemed to squander the judge's goodwill by publicly and repeatedly announcing that he was a victim of political persecution. The judge seemed perplexed. Why was D'Souza engaging in self-sabotage? Did he have some kind of psychological affliction? Why, in the first place, did a man who had achieved so much success so carelessly flout the law when there was so little to gain? In short, how could such a smart man be so stupid?

Indeed, D'Souza may be the most maddening, bewildering figure in the punditry world. He is eminently likable in person: courteous, avuncular, chatty, quick to laugh, and willing to lay himself open to ridicule. He's also a doting father to an intelligent, polite 20-year-old daughter, who utterly reveres him. But in his public life he's pathologically drawn to pushing the bounds of civil discourse, often with a disinterest in backing up his assertions with facts. While this approach has won him hundreds of thousands of fans of the Joe the Plumber variety, it has eaten away at his respectability in intellectual circles. Few members of the media elite, he complains, have been willing to publicly defend him.

Immigrant Narrative

Even as a kid, D'Souza demonstrated versions of these two sides—the hopeful immigrant, determined to excel, and the attention-seeking pest. One of his aspirations as a middle-class boy growing up in Mumbai was to memorize the entire English dictionary. Through a Rotary exchange pro-

PHOTOGRAPHS: TOP, COURTESY OF THE RONALD REAGAN LIBRARY; BOTTOM LEFT AND RIGHT, COURTESY OF DINESH D'SOUZA

"PART OF WHAT YOU LEARN ABOUT LIFE IS THAT A WRECKING BALL CAN COME OUT OF NOWHERE," SAYS D'SOUZA.

sleeping quarters and climb onto a top bunk, above a 400-pound guy who, "when he moves, the whole bunk bed shakes." He would do his best to focus on his book and to block out the conversation.

Long, who was running against Kirsten Gillibrand in the U.S. Senate race in New York. At one point, he was facing up to two years in prison, though he ultimately got eight months in a halfway house, plus community service, and a \$30,000 fine. Still, it's no small price to pay given that most people who commit the same crime don't get caught. So, why is he so animated? According to D'Souza, there's a conspiracy afoot: he's a victim of Obama's anti-colonialist rage.

It makes perfect sense, right? In the past five years, he has turned Obama's alleged rage into a fortune with three books—*The Roots of Obama's Rage*, *Obama's America*, and *America: Imagine a World With-*

ANNOUNCED
Clockwise from top:
Ronald Reagan with
D'Souza, 1988; William
F. Buckley Jr. and
D'Souza, 1982; D'Souza
and Richard Nixon,
late 1980s.



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IN THE HOOD
D'Souza reads the newspaper outside the confinement center; inset, at home after a night at the center.

gram he ended up, at age 17, in a small town in Arizona. After “crushing the S.A.T.’s,” he landed at Dartmouth. The ways of the Northeast elite were totally alien to him, but he quickly found a group of students that would become his “surrogate family” and unleash his inner frat-boy knucklehead. With support from a charismatic professor, Jeffrey Hart, who was a senior editor at William F. Buckley Jr.’s *The National Review*, the group founded *The Dartmouth Review*, with the aim of challenging in the most offensive ways possible what they saw as liberal campus claptrap. Under D’Souza’s editorship, the paper published a “lighthearted interview” with a former member of the Ku Klux Klan, accompanied by a staged photo of a black man hanging from a tree; an article about affirmative action entitled “Dis Sho’ Ain’t No Jive, Bro,” written in Ebonics; and the names of members of the Gay Student Alliance. In his memoir, *Stress Test*, former Treasury secretary Tim Geithner, who attended Dartmouth at the same time as D’Souza, recalls running into him at a coffee shop and asking him “how it felt to be such a dick.”

government as a slog, in 1989 he accepted a job offer from the American Enterprise Institute, the pre-eminent conservative think tank.

He could easily have spent the next couple of years churning out dry policy pieces. Indeed, his first few books went nowhere. But in 1991, his *Illiberal Education* was a smash hit: an exhaustively researched takedown of the political correctness that was sweeping college campuses and that he believed was undermining academic standards and chilling freedom of thought. His editor, Adam Bellow (son of novelist Saul Bellow), had urged D’Souza to aim to engage even liberals, and D’Souza did just that. The book put on the map a conversation that was necessary at the time, and it became a best-seller, getting rave reviews

ter dating Laura Ingraham and then Ann Coulter, he found the

ultimate prize in Dixie Brubaker, a beautiful blonde from a conservative California family, whom he had met while working in the White House; they married in 1992. D’Souza admits, “It was my mission to marry the all-American girl.”

He had the plum job, the perfect wife, and a provocative tack that seemed to work. Emboldened by the success of *Illiberal Education*, he pushed his argument further, in 1995, with *The End of Racism*. His being brown himself, he believed, put him in a privileged position to comment on race and would inoculate him against criticism. Among his assertions: slavery in this country was not actually based on race. That if we’re going to discuss America owing blacks reparations for slavery, then what do blacks owe America for the abolition of slavery? He riffed on “widely different personalities” developed during slavery—the playful Sambo, the sullen ‘field nigger,’ the dependable Mammy, the sly and inscrutable trickster—that, he claimed, were “still recognizable.” It was another best-seller, but this time the press denounced it as insensitive. Sullivan, who had planned to run an excerpt in *The New Republic*, declined to publish it. Eventually, recalls Sullivan, “in the office, he was called by his nickname, ‘Distort Denews.’” Glenn Loury and Bob Woodson, two African-American colleagues at A.E.I., resigned in protest. As Loury wrote, “It violated the canons of civility and commonality.”

But, D’Souza says, “I didn’t believe that

“I’LL BE ON MY BED. I’LL HEAR FOUR GUYS DISCUSSING THE TITS ON THE WOMAN AT LOS TACOS. IT WILL GO ON AND ON.”

D’Souza allows that some of his behavior may have been “sophomoric.” But, as the leader of the young conservative counter-Establishment, he got national attention. “Here I am. I’m 20 years old, 21, and I find myself being written about in *The New York Times* and *Newsweek*,” D’Souza recalls. Soon after graduation, he parlayed his young fame into a stint as managing editor of a right-wing quarterly, *Policy Review*, before landing a job in the Reagan White House as a domestic-policy analyst. Seeing a career in

and prominent cover placement in *The Atlantic*, *The New York Review of Books*, and *The New Republic*. “*Illiberal Education* was terrific,” recalls Andrew Sullivan, then the editor of *The New Republic*. “He had a sharp intellect and a gift for provocation, in a good way.”

“Suddenly, I just became a huge mainstream celebrity in the intellectual world,” says D’Souza, who was inundated with speaking invitations. He also became a hot commodity among blonde conservatives. Af-

sensitivity had a legitimate place in the debate. Sensitivity was the reason why the debate had the artificiality it did. Everyone has to walk on eggshells. . . . And I'm like, 'I'm not going to do that. . . . I didn't do any of this to you. So I don't owe you anything.'” He ditched Washington for his wife's hometown of San Diego and got a job at the Hoover Institution, Stanford's conservative think tank.

After making wild arguments about race, he would make even wilder argu-

his Hoover colleagues to jealousy. “There was a simmering resentment against me at Hoover,” he says. “They all sit around and have coffee once a week. I live in San Diego. I'm not at Hoover. And so they have these very chic events, and I literally parachute in. I'm the celebrity over there. And then I parachute out and I'm gone.” Whether it was their resentment over his stardom or simply that they hated the book, the rift was untenable, and he resigned. His intellectual allies were dwindling.

What was the deal with his name? In *The Roots of Obama's Rage* (2010), D'Souza answered those questions for them. Obama was born in Hawaii, he admitted, and he wasn't, to anyone's knowledge, Muslim. But he had a single goal: to avenge the injustices inflicted by colonialism upon his father's Kenyan homeland, by intentionally weakening America's economy and power in the world. The book was written in two months, he boasted in the introduction. And with sentences like these, it showed: “The most powerful country in the world is being governed according to the dream of a Luo tribesman of the 1950s—a polygamist who abandoned his wives, drank himself into a stupor, and bounced around on two iron legs . . . raging against the world for denying him the realization of his anti-colonial ambitions. This philandering, inebricated, African socialist is now setting the nation's agenda through the reincarnation of his dreams in his son.”

The conservative *Weekly Standard* called the book “lunacy,” but to thousands of Americans—among them Newt Gingrich—D'Souza's theory sounded about right; the book was an instant best-seller. But D'Souza knew there were millions more out there who needed to hear this message. “The battlefield is much bigger. To reach that battlefield, you have to go beyond books.” Inspired by the success of *Fahrenheit 9/11*, D'Souza partnered with Gerald Molen, the right-wing co-producer of *Schindler's List*, raised \$2.5 million from private individuals, and made the 2012 documentary *2016: Obama's America*. It received a 26 percent score from critics on Rotten Tomatoes, but what did he care? He was a rock star again, this time doing large arenas. He found in his new fans “foot soldiers that are looking for leadership, intel-

AT THE NEW REPUBLIC, SAYS ANDREW SULLIVAN, D'SOUZA WAS KNOWN AS

“DISTORT DENEWSA.”

ments about 9/11, in the 2007 book *The Enemy at Home: The Cultural Left and Its Responsibility for 9/11*—whose title summed up its thesis. The real reason terrorists destroyed the Twin Towers, he wrote, was anger stirred by the left—Hillary Clinton, Nancy Pelosi, Planned Parenthood, *Brokeback Mountain*, and *The Vagina Monologues*. He placed special blame on divorce and adultery, inventions, he wrote, of the left. The logic was as tortuous as it needed to be: the Abu Ghraib scandal, for example, was actually the fault of liberals because the soldiers who enacted the despicable acts, Lyndie England and Charles Graner, were divorced, sex-crazed partiers who were therefore “act[ing] out the fantasies of blue America.” As a remedy to terrorism, he advocated that God-fearing right-wing Americans should join forces with their natural ally, traditional Muslims, including those who agree with Sharia law. Many right-wing critics, including some at the Hoover Institution, hadn't encountered such creative hypothesizing, and they were nearly unanimous in their appraisal—calling his arguments “dishonest,” “intellectually obtuse,” and “suicidal.”

He recognizes that he may have gone overboard with his thesis. “Look, I may be wrong about it,” he says today. “I am attracted to arguments that have a certain plausible originality to them.” But he ascribes the criticism coming from

On a Wing and a Prayer

But as that world appeared to be closing on D'Souza, another, larger world was opening to him. D'Souza's other beat had been Christianity (with such books as *What's So Great About Christianity* and *Life After Death*), and he eventually gained entrée to the mega-church speaking circuit. In venues such as Rick Warren's Saddleback Church, in Orange County, which claims to have more than 20,000 congregants, D'Souza says he was selling 800 books in a day. He'd never encountered the American masses before, but they seemed to love him.

As passionate as these folks were about God, they were as fearful of Barack Obama, who had just taken office. Where did this guy come from? Was he African? Muslim?

BORDER PATROL
D'Souza in his
La Jolla office,
contributing
commentary for a
news program
via Skype.





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lectual leadership, cultural leadership.... Some of them regard me as a hero.”

But in typical Hollywood fashion, just as he was lapping up his newfound glory, the wheels began to come off his private life. Back in 2010, D’Souza had been asked to be president of the King’s College, a small evangelical college in Manhattan. D’Souza wasn’t strictly evangelical—he was raised Catholic—but says he was leaning in that direction. And he had the name recognition King’s was looking for in its quest to raise

ler Vawser, and Vawser’s wife. Vawser was concerned; according to court documents, D’Souza assured him it was fine. If anyone should ask about it, D’Souza said, Vawser should say that he knew Long and that he supported her candidacy. When Long later asked D’Souza about these unusually large contributions, D’Souza assured her that the individuals had the means. Despite the trail of untruths, D’Souza casts the act as one of generosity of spirit and misguided friendship. “All of my friends supported

“DINESH WAS TRYING TO DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO ALIENATE THE GOVERNMENT AND THE COURT.”

money. The offer came with a reported seven-figure salary, and he accepted. While he was packing his bags for New York, “I discovered, to my horror, irrefutable evidence that my wife was involved with someone else.” D’Souza says that Dixie had grown bored with his political life and had no interest in repairing their marriage, so he went to New York without her, traumatized. (Dixie says this is “simply untrue.... I signed us up for a marriage-counseling retreat... and attended marriage-counseling sessions.”)

Given his leadership role at a Christian college, he might have handled the situation with as much grace and care as possible. Instead, his old recklessness took hold. In the summer of 2012, before any divorce papers were filed, he began secretly seeing Denise Odie Joseph II, a D’Souza groupie, married and 22 years his junior. She kept a blog called “I, Denise, Lust After...” on which she called D’Souza “one of our favorite conservative activist philosophers.” He admits, “I was completely blown away.”

It was too dizzying a time to deal with the mundane obligations he’d taken on, like helping to fund-raise for Wendy Long, his old *Dartmouth Review* compatriot, in her Senate race. The campaign was hopeless, “a joke,” according to D’Souza, and she kept asking him to do tedious tasks, like meeting with groups of wealthy Indian doctors in Westchester to ask for their support. He completely blew it off but was starting to feel guilty.

He’d already reached the legal donation limit by giving \$10,000, on behalf of himself and his estranged wife. But there was a lot more needed. So he asked his new lover and her husband to contribute \$10,000 and said he’d reimburse them. He asked the same of his young assistant, Ty-

Wendy Long, but none of them supported her like this. Why? They were too smart to do it.... I felt inwardly that I should do more. I felt an obligation to do more.” Not so obligated, it should be said, that it was worth fund-raising the legal way—like traveling to Westchester to meet with a group of Indian doctors.

D’Souza felt indestructible, and he was on a roll. Weeks after orchestrating the illegal contributions, he brought Joseph along to a conference in South Carolina. The subject was how to apply a Christian worldview to one’s life, and D’Souza was the keynote speaker. He introduced Joseph as his fiancée to several people, even though both of them were still married to others. Alas, a reporter named Warren Cole Smith from the Christian publication *World Magazine* discovered that he and Joseph were sharing a room. Six days later, Smith called D’Souza to ask how he could be engaged when he was still married. D’Souza replied that he had filed for divorce “recently.” When Smith checked, it turned out that D’Souza had filed for divorce that very day.

D’Souza maintains that he was the victim of a vendetta: Marvin Olasky, the editor of *World Magazine*, who had been provost at the King’s College, had fought against D’Souza’s appointment. The reporter, Smith, had been a consultant to the King’s College until D’Souza ended his contract. In addition, says D’Souza, the suggestion that he was committing adultery and lying about it to his employers was disingenuous; he says that he’d already told then King’s College board chairman Andy Mills that his marriage was effectively over before taking the job. Mills, however, disputes D’Souza’s ac-



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To back up this claim, Brafman cited sever-

Jolly Good Felon

On May 20, 2014, the day the trial was to begin, D'Souza pleaded guilty to the illegal campaign contribution charge (taking the second charge off the table) and professed to take responsibility for his actions. The next few months would be critical, as the judge would be deliberating on the appropriate sentence. The moment called for humility. D'Souza enlisted 27 people—colleagues, friends, and family members in India—to write to the judge on his behalf. While they got busy attesting to his remorse, he began publicly conveying just the opposite. Brafman begged his client to keep his mouth shut, but D'Souza couldn't resist. He was finishing up his second documentary, *America: Imagine a World Without Her*, which was to be released imminently, and had to insert one last scene: Dinesh himself in handcuffs, rubbing his eyes, accompanied by a treacly voice-over: "I'm not above the law. No one is. But we don't want to live in a society where Lady Justice has one eye open and winks at her friends, and casts the evil eye at her adversaries. When will it stop?" He repeated a similar line in interviews with

Judge Berman could only wonder. "I'm not sure, Mr. D'Souza, that you get it," he told him on September 23, the day of the sentencing hearing. "The defense says it has accepted the court's rulings in this case, yet Mr. D'Souza . . . continues to deflect and minimize the significance of the crime and of his behavior." D'Souza's public pronouncements, he went on, were "totally thoughtless and not self-reflective and not self aware. . . . I'm totally confident that Lady Justice is doing her job and that she's not taking off her blindfold to target Dinesh D'Souza." D'Souza's trail of bluster had finally caught up with him in court. The judge sentenced him to five years' probation, a full day of community service each week for those five years, eight months in a confinement center, and therapeutic counseling. A week later, D'Souza reportedly had a request. Could he delay the sentence? Because he really wanted to, among other things, promote his new movie. The judge wrote, "Respectfully denied."

In October, D'Souza entered the confinement center, joining the kind of people he had publicly referred to as "parasitic." Luckily, none seemed to be familiar with his work. Those first days had their *Orange Is the New Black* moments. The first night, he slept "with one eye open." While he was lying there, his 400-pound bunkmate struck up a conversation: "He goes, 'Hey, man, what are you in for?' I go, 'Campaign-finance violation.' He goes, 'What the fuck does that mean?' I go, 'Well, my friend was running for the Senate, and



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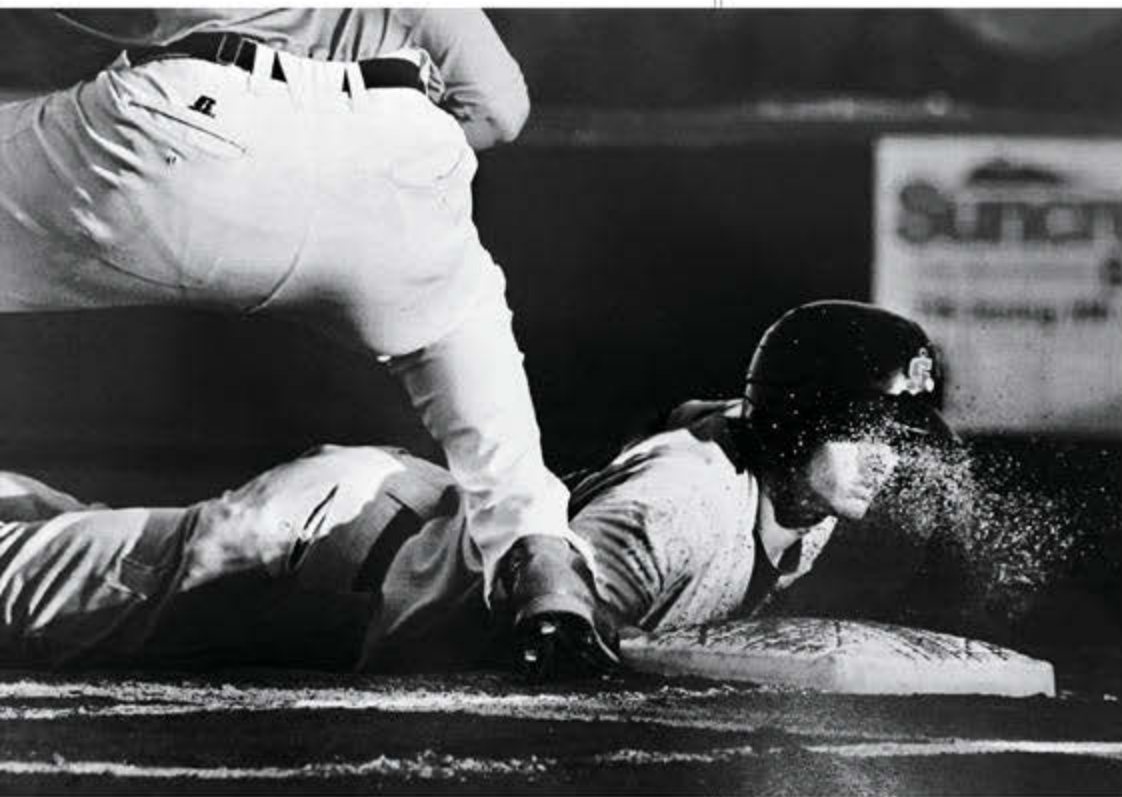
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FANTASYBALL



Division
Championship,
2014, from
Tabitha Soren's
"Fantasy Life"
series.

In 2003, Tabitha Soren photographed 21 members of the Oakland A's 2002 draft class. "They were young, very excited, really hopeful," she says. "But I knew statistically their chances were not great." (Only about 17 percent of players drafted actually make it to the major leagues.) Soren stayed in contact with them and photographed these same players periodically over the next 12 years. She found that, in the end, the statistics were cruelly accurate. Only 5 of the 21 had major-league careers. "The rest of them had to find new ways to organize their sense of self," Soren says. A few now coach Little League. One is a coal miner. "That's why my [upcoming Los Angeles gallery] show is called 'Fantasy Life.' Baseball is a metaphor for all these other fantasies that are part of American culture: The fantasy that failure leads to success, despite hitting the ball successfully only around a third of the time. The romantic myth of the restless wanderer, even as they cram in 162 major-league games a season. And the central American fantasy that says we have to do something extraordinary to lead a meaningful life." This photo and others depicting the glories and banalities of baseball life—and the happiness possible after, or in lieu of, *The Show*—are on display from April 25 to June 6 at the Kopeikin Gallery, in Los Angeles.

—DAVE EGGERS

SCANDAL

I gave her too much money. I raised money for her in the wrong way.' So he goes, 'Shit!

Can you raise money for me?' I go, 'No.' Then there was the mandatory rape class, which was about 'establishing that all of us have a right not to be raped.' Very reassuring."

But D'Souza also shows flashes of self-reflection. Looking back on the recent events in his life, he says, "Part of what you learn about life is that a wrecking ball can come out of nowhere, and it isn't just going to take out your left toe. It can hit you right in the middle and take you down." His personal experience has made him re-assess some of his public stances. His community service, teaching English to Mexican immigrants, some of whom are undocumented, has softened his stance on immigration. He once had a credo that "the quality of the immigrant is

directly proportional to the distance traveled to get here. . . . But I now see that the adults in my class are incredibly industrious, determined, and hardworking, and no less strenuous in their pursuit of the American Dream than any other immigrant group." Likewise, his own divorce has "sobered and humbled me and made me a lot more tentative about things I was sure about." It seems he's no longer convinced that the country's acceptance of divorce led to the destruction of the World Trade Center. And he is as productive as ever. His future plans include starting a PAC, to pay for getting his *America* documentary shown on hundreds of campuses, and writing a new book with a companion film about the "secret history" of the left. He is also trying his hand at Christian-themed feature films and, to that end, is busy writing screenplays for a thriller and a family film.

Still, old addictions are hard to break. On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, he tweeted, "An interesting parallel: MLK was targeted by J. Edgar Hoover, an unsavory character. I was targeted by the equally unsavory B. Hussein Obama." You'd think he'd made his point already. But in his view, it was working—since his sentencing, he says he has raised \$10 million toward his new film—so why stop? "This whole episode," he says, "far from denting my career, has actually brought me to the attention of a wider audience." □

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To see a day in the **LIFE** of Dinesh D'Souza, go to **VF.COM/MAY2015**.



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BROADWAY'S *ROTTEN!* LUCK

Something Rotten! co-stars Christian Borle and Brian d'Arcy James, photographed in New York.

Betting on a new Broadway musical is like betting on a racehorse: the shrewd gambler knows nothing guarantees a winner but great bloodlines help. So, there is high expectation for *Something Rotten!*, a musical comedy about the very first musical comedy, set for the purposes of this showbiz fable in the 1590s, when all the world was a stage for William Shakespeare. The director and choreographer is Casey Nicholaw, who did the same for *Aladdin* and co-directed *The Book of Mormon*, while producer Kevin McCollum has won three Tonys for best musical (*In the Heights*, *Avenue Q*, and *Rent*).

No wonder *Something Rotten!* attracted such a sterling cast, headed by Brian d'Arcy James (the original Shrek on Broadway) and Christian Borle (Tony winner for *Peter and the Starcatcher*). D'Arcy James plays Nick Bottom, half of a playwriting duo who are eager to see their names in candlelights but whose talents are

outshone by you-know-who. The solution comes from Brad Oscar as Nostradamus, who predicts in a classic showstopper called "A Musical" why the future of TKTS belongs to those who can act, sing, and dance all at once. If d'Arcy James plays Bottom as, in his words, "an Everyman that you want to see succeed," Borle plays Shakespeare as a weary rock star, or, as he puts it, a "latter-era Britney Spears."

Both d'Arcy James and Borle starred in *Smash*, the NBC TV series on the troubled making of a musical about Marilyn Monroe called *Bombshell*. Er, are there any similarities between *Bombshell* and the behind-the-scenes high jinks of *Something Rotten!* as the cast prepares for its April premiere? Yes, but not what you might think. "The one similarity is that we all care about making the show as good as it can be," Borle says. The big difference, he says, is that working on *Something Rotten!* is "a lovefest." Since we are in an exclamatory mood, let's make that "Lovefest!"

—JIM KELLY



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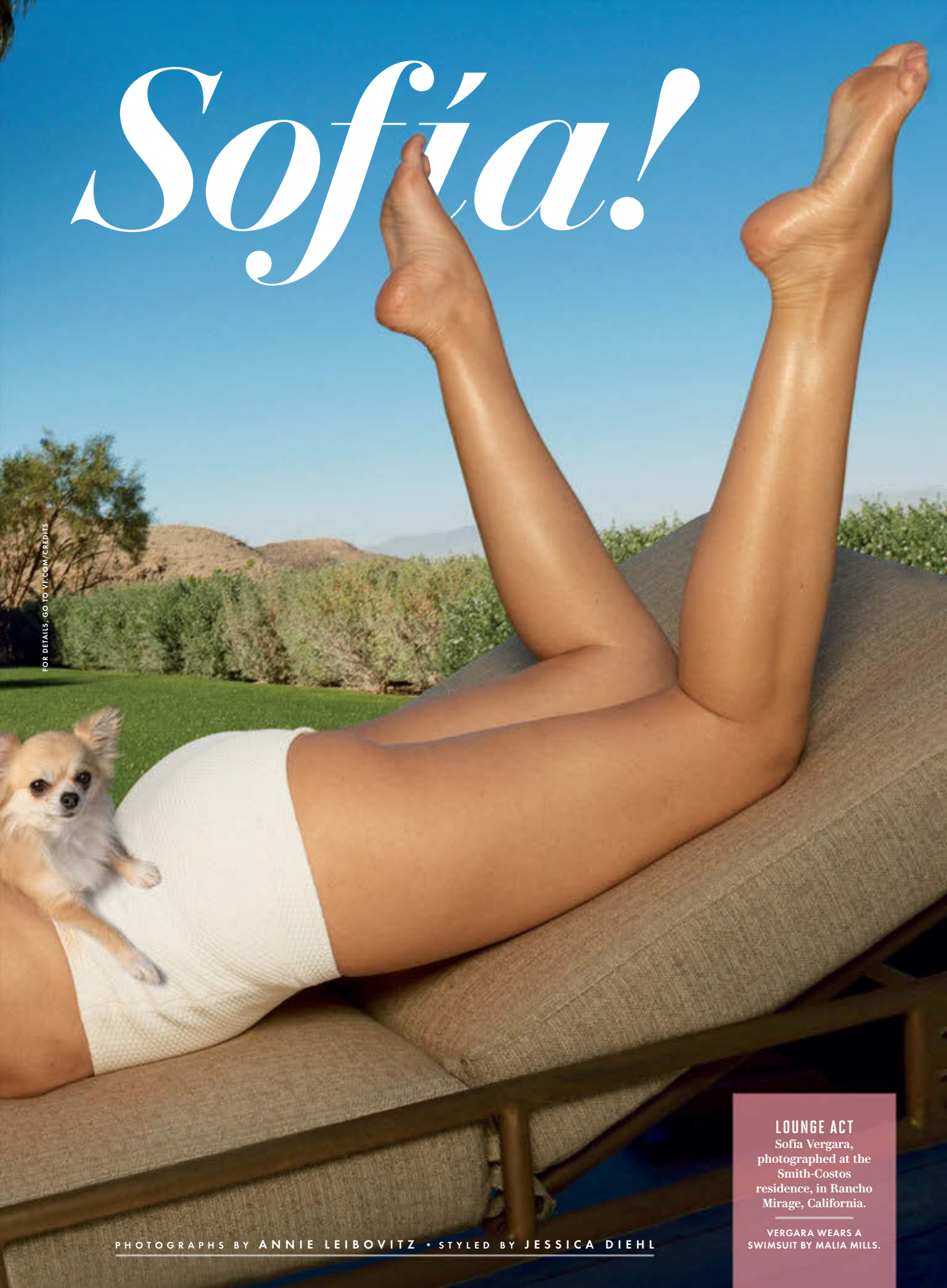
La Vida

Not since Sophia Loren has Hollywood seen such an effortless, unapologetic sex symbol as *Modern Family*'s Sofia Vergara. And never one with her business *cojones*. (She's the top-earning actress on TV.) As Vergara and Reese Witherspoon star in this month's *Hot Pursuit*, which they co-produced, the 42-year-old Colombian tells LILIANOLIK how she turned her biggest liability into gold—and what she's ready to do for love



Sofía!

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LOUNGE ACT

Sofia Vergara,
photographed at the
Smith-Costos
residence, in Rancho
Mirage, California.

VERGARA WEARS A
SWIMSUIT BY MALIA MILLS.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANNIE LEIBOVITZ • STYLED BY JESSICA DIEHL

S

ofia Vergara is hubba-hubba incarnate. She walks into a room, and all of a sudden, heads are on swivels, and jaws are on floors, tongues unrolling from mouths like so many pink red carpets. There's something outrageous about her good looks. Something exaggerated, gaudy, blatant, preposterous. Something borderline indecent even. That luscious face—those kiss-puffed lips and velvety eyes, skin without a flaw, lustrous as a pearl—atop that bodacious bod—the softly swelling hips, the gently tapering waist, the oodles of breast and thigh and buttock—is too much. It's overkill. Not to mention in bad taste. I mean, shouldn't she be a little less explicit about her extraordinary physical assets? Wear them not quite so proudly? Act as if they're her burden rather than her glory? Or at least downplay them some? Cool it, for instance, on the clothes that make her look naked? Surely the necklines don't have to be as low-dipping as the heels are high-climbing? The fabrics as clingy as the patterns are predatory? (She's not dressed, she's gift-wrapped.) Why doesn't she do what actresses the public would prefer to see in flagrante than in Shakespeare so often do and turn her hair into a veil she can hide behind, treat her beauty like it's a disfigurement? Or like it's an obstacle, the thing standing between her and True Artistedom? (Charlize Theron didn't win that Oscar until she blimped out and got herself prosthetic teeth and a frizzed-out mullet.) Or like it's a joke—the most popular option of all? Deface it with tattoos and piercings, extreme applications of eye shadow? Degrade it by featuring it in a sex tape with negligible production values—improper framing, poor sound quality, unflattering lighting?

Maybe because she's not an American by birth and therefore the crackpot notion that all men are created equal never even crossed her mind. Or maybe because she's a Catholic, convent-educated, and so understands that the need to worship isn't unseemly or evidence of weak character, that it's a perfectly natural human impulse, and is thus able to accept the rapture she inspires with a grace and an ease and an utter lack of neurosis. Small wonder that Sophia Loren (born in 1934) was her idol growing up. That's about how far back you have to go to find another un-ironic sex symbol.

DYNAMIC DUO

"I've never been so charmed by anyone in my life," says Reese Witherspoon, who co-stars in—and co-produced—the upcoming comedy *Hot Pursuit* with Vergara.

VERGARA WEARS FURS BY DENNIS BASSO AND SPRUNG FRÈRES; EARRINGS FROM FRED LEIGHTON; VINTAGE SWIMSUIT COURTESY OF ALBRIGHT FASHION LIBRARY.

How to Make an Entrance

The room Sofia is walking into today, known as "The Living Room"—the cozy folksiness of the name a dead giveaway that it's going to be the ultimate in austere chic—is on the first floor of the Peninsula Beverly Hills. Sofia wanted to meet there for afternoon tea. Tea doesn't seem like it would be her cup of, and it certainly isn't mine, but, hey, I can crook my pinkie when the circumstances demand it. I arrive at 1:30, though I'm not due 'til 2, because the ebbs and flows of L.A. traffic are mysterious to me, plus intimidating, which means I'm half an hour early minimum to every appointment in the city.

The Peninsula is, as I suspected, a very hoity-toity affair, so understated in its elegance it's almost flashy, with a clientele that likes puttin' on the Ritz even at hotels that aren't. Lots of women dressed to the nines, swizzle-stick-thin with ash-blond hair and of no discernible age other than *not-old*, fussing with teapots and sugar bowls and nibbling on sandwiches the size of large crumbs. The males present are either waiters—Latino, every one—in button-down shirts and vests, darting hither and yon unobtrusively, trays balanced on spread palms, or high-level wheeler-dealers—white, every one—in dark suits with berserkly expensive-looking watches and/or ties and/or briefcases, conducting urgent business in low voices.

Sofia enters at two on the dot, the moment the heads-and-jaws-and-tongues thing happens, though the crowd is a sophisticated one, so it gets ahold of itself pretty quick, remembers that maintaining a blasé front is how you prove you belong, the secret handshake, and people start pretending that they were yawning or stretching or signaling for the check—anything other than gawking like fish-mouthed hick tourists—then return to their conversations or cell-phone screens, and thereafter sneak only the discreetest of peeks. Sofia acts as if she doesn't notice the furor she's created, not flinching, not even blink-

HAIR PRODUCTS BY SERGE NORMANT; MAKEUP PRODUCTS BY CHARLOTTE TILBURY; NAIL ENAMEL BY DEBORAH LIPPMANN; HAIR BY SERGE NORMANT; MAKEUP BY CHARLOTTE TILBURY; MANICURE BY DEBORAH LIPPMANN; SET DESIGN BY MARY HOWARD STUDIO; PRODUCED ON LOCATION BY PORTFOLIO ONE; FOR DETAILS, GO TO VFCOM/credits

"I NEVER WANTED TO
BE AN ACTRESS.

I TAKE ACTING AS A GIFT, BECAUSE IT WAS NOTHING
THAT I EVER DREAMED ABOUT GROWING UP."



ing, as she crosses from one end of the room to the other, running the gauntlet of all those non-looks without a trace of shyness or self-consciousness. As I wait for her to reach our table, it occurs to me that that's a star's job—or a star's trick: to be watched by eyes both human and camera while behaving as if unobserved, never breaking the spell.

A waiter pulls out the chair for her, and she thanks him in Spanish, and the expression on his face says he wants the earth to open up and swallow him whole because life can't get any sweeter. Sofia looks—surprise, surprise—like the character she plays on the Emmy Award-winning ABC sitcom *Modern Family*; Gloria Delgado-Pritchett, the much younger wife of Jay Pritchett (Ed O'Neill). Dresses like her, too: jeans that are less pants than a second skin, snug top with a cheetah motif on it, and a humdinger diamond on her ring finger that puts all other humdinger diamonds in the vicinity to shame. Also, sounds like her. (That accent, let me tell you, is not part of the act.)

We don't waste any time, get right down to it. Sofia just came from a fitting, so her breasts are on her brain.

Sofia: "My boobs are, like, huge." She gives a representation of said hugeness with her hands. "My whole life, buying a bra was a nightmare. What I used to do when I moved to L.A., I found places like Frederick's of Hollywood that make bras for streetwalkers."

Me (confused): "Streetwalkers? Like, prostitutes? Like, hookers?"

Sofia (shaking her head, laughing): "No, no, not hookers. I can't think of the word. You know"—doing a kind of hootchy-kootchy shimmy with her shoulders—"dancers."

Me (understanding dawning): "Oh oh oh, you mean *strippers*."

Sofia: "Yes, strippers. Skinny girls with gigantic boobs."

Me: "Gigantic fake boobs."

Sofia: "Believe me, I wish I had fake boobs. I lay down and they completely go down like all the way, like here." Another representation with her hands. "It's not fun."

(Note to reader: I don't claim to have the most discerning eye when it comes to matters mammary, but Sofia's breasts look plenty good to me. Large, yes, yet high and pert. Oomphy, too.)


Talk of breasts quite naturally segues into talk of babies. Sofia was public about her decision to freeze her eggs two years ago. She recently accepted a marriage proposal from Big Dick Richie, arguably the hunkiest of the *Magic Mike* hunks. Well, technically, she accepted the proposal from Joe Manganiello, the actor who plays Big Dick Richie. (Like Sofia, Joe is freak-of-nature gorgeous. People don't look; they ogle.) Says Sofia, "The day that I sent the press release [announcing the breakup with a different fiancé, Nick Loeb], Joe immediately contacted Jesse Tyler Ferguson [*Modern Family*'s Mitchell Pritchett], like, Please, please, please tell her I want her number. And I'm like, Jesse, no, he's too handsome. Then, after two days of Jesse trying to convince me, I'm like, O.K., give him my number. I'm thinking, I'm in New Orleans shooting, and he's in L.A. Nothing's going to happen. But we started talking a lot, and then he showed up in New Orleans. Since then we've been inseparable. There's nothing about him I'd change other than the fact that he's four years younger than me [he's 38 to her 42]." (Another note to reader: Sofia's love life is, to me, part of her un-ironic sex-symbol side. It's hyper-volatile—and hyperactive—in that Old Hollywood Lana Turner/Ava Gardner/Elizabeth Taylor way. She was, it seemed, forever getting engaged and disengaged from the aforementioned Nick Loeb, the "Onion

G-L-O-R-I-A

"People who look like that are never funny. But she was," says *Modern Family* co-creator Christopher Lloyd on casting Vergara.

VERGARA WEARS A SWIMSUIT BY MALIA MILLS; HAT BY GIOVANNIO.



A woman with long blonde hair, wearing a white sleeveless dress, is sitting on a white wicker lounge chair. She is barefoot and has a large diamond ring on her left hand. She is positioned next to a large agave plant with thick, green, pointed leaves. The background shows some foliage and a building. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

“MY SON, MANOLO, IS 23 YEARS OLD,
WHICH IS GOING TO BE REALLY WEIRD
IF I HAVE ANOTHER BABY.
BUT, YOU KNOW,
JOE WANTS BABIES.”

Crunch King,” an entrepreneur as passionate about crispy condiments as he is about beautiful women. And apart from Loeb and Manganiello, she’s been reportedly linked to heartthrob pop stars—Craig David and Enrique Iglesias—heartthrob actors—Tom Cruise and Tyrese Gibson—and heartthrob hoodlums—Chris Paciello, a Johnny Stompanato-like Italian Stallion Miami-nightclub owner and made man turned unmade man when he ratted out high-ranking members of the Bonanno crime family, and Andres López López, a former Colombian drug trafficker and cartel lieutenant.)

Now that wedded bliss is just around the corner, it sounds as if Sofia’s seriously considering taking those eggs off ice. “My son, Manolo, is 23 years old, which is going to be really weird if I have another baby. But, you know, Joe wants babies and if it’s going to make him super-happy, then—” She dot-dot-dots, lifting a lovely shoulder.

How to Make It Happen

Before the happily-ever-after, though, the once-upon-a-time: Sofia was 37, a 20-year veteran of the entertainment industry, when she became an overnight sensation on *Modern Family*. She was just 17, a senior at Marymount, founded by the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary—a real live Catholic schoolgirl, a fantasy come true!—the day a photographer got a load of her catching rays in her hometown of Barranquilla, Colombia, and cast her in a spot for Pepsi. The concept of the commercial was, basically, T&A&G (-string): Sofia on a beach in an itty-bitsy-teeny-weeny. The waves weren’t the only things swelling as she jiggled her way across the hot sand to cool off with an ice-cold carbonated beverage. The ad, widely broadcast in Latin America, was a smash, as was she. And, all at once, it was modeling and acting offers galore.

Except she didn’t want to model or act. She wanted Barranquilla and a nice, simple life. And she got it. At 18 she married her high-school sweetheart, Joe Gonzalez, and enrolled in college to study dentistry. At 20, though, the nice simple life seemed not so nice and less simple than dumb, and it was adios to Joe and bad breath. Packing up her bags, she headed to Bogotá with her new baby. By her mid-20s she was a host on a hugely popular television show in Latin America. She—well, why don’t I let Sofia describe her job? “It was a political kind of thing—serious. I was the fun part. They would put me on to, like, kid around with people, get their real personalities.” She even interviewed the president of Colombia, though she can’t remember which one. (How much you want to bet he didn’t forget her?) In the mid-90s, she packed her bags again, headed to Miami. Took a job with Univision, hosting a travel show, *Fuera de Serie*, which meant getting back into a bikini so small it made Eve look overdressed in a fig leaf. Says Sofia, “I was recognized by every Latin person in the United States because there were only two TV stations

for Latin people. So everybody is watching you no matter what—if you’re good or bad, they’re watching you.”

Sofia then set her sights on the English-speaking market; her first crossover role was as the maid who gets her toes sucked by Stanley Tucci in 2002’s *Big Trouble*. *Big Trouble* wasn’t exactly the second coming of *Citizen Kane*. Still, it was a beginning.

And the parts would get larger, the projects more prestigious: stealing every scene she was in as Tyrese Gibson’s girlfriend in *Four Brothers*, proving too much woman for the little boys of *Entourage*, pumping sex and sass into a couple of Tyler Perry movies. There were two sitcoms, *Hot Properties* and *The Knights of Prosperity*. Neither caught on. *Dirty Sexy Money* looked promising until the writers’ strike happened, and it was curtains for it too.

And then along came *Modern Family*. Christopher Lloyd, the show’s co-creator, recalls the initial meeting with Sofia: “She walked into the room. And if you’ve worked in Hollywood for any length of time, you know that people who look like that are never funny. But she was.” (Yet another note to reader: there’s no disputing Lloyd’s claim that great-looking people are rarely laugh-a-minute. I’d argue, though, that self-deprecation is a must for Sofia. She has to trash herself a little, just to make the fact that she’s so scarily beautiful less, well, scary.) Lloyd and partner Steve Levitan had a loose conception of Gloria’s character, but they immediately began tailoring the role specifically to Sofia, giving Gloria a Colombian background and a son named Manny. *Modern Family* was an instant hit. And thanks to it, Sofia became rich and famous beyond her wildest dreams, and the top-earning actress in television three years running, according to *Forbes* magazine, a four-time Emmy Award nominee, and a household name not only in Latin America but in America America.

How to Really Make It Happen

You tell the story like this, and that’s how Sofia more or less tells it, and it sounds easy. Plus, she makes it look easy. And not just because she looks like she looks—a movie star, no-brainer and can’t-miss—but because she behaves like she behaves. She’s warm and open and generous. (Says Ed O’Neill, “In interviews Sofia will say about me, ‘He’s a sexy guy,’ and I always think, That is so kind of her.”) Dishes it out, though more often takes it. It’s this quality that makes her so great on Conan and Letterman and Ellen. She might be the host with the most, but she’s an even better guest. On *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* last year she read a

SOAP STAR

“My boobs are, like, huge,” Vergara says. “My whole life, buying a bra was a nightmare.”

VERGARA WEARS EARRINGS AND A NECKLACE BY VAN CLEEF & ARPELS.

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For video from the shoot and a sit-down interview with VERGARA, go to VF.COM/MAY2015.

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“I’M NOT SCARED OF STEREOTYPES.
IF GLORIA IS A
STEREOTYPE, SO WHAT?
WHO WOULDN’T WANT TO BE GLORIA?”



Civil War at

Brian Williams's stunning fall was just the latest, and worst, of the debacles Comcast, in 2011, a period that has seen *Today* and *Meet the Press* executive team: Steve Burke, Patricia Fili-Krushel, and Deborah Turness. As former news chief Andrew Lack returns to the



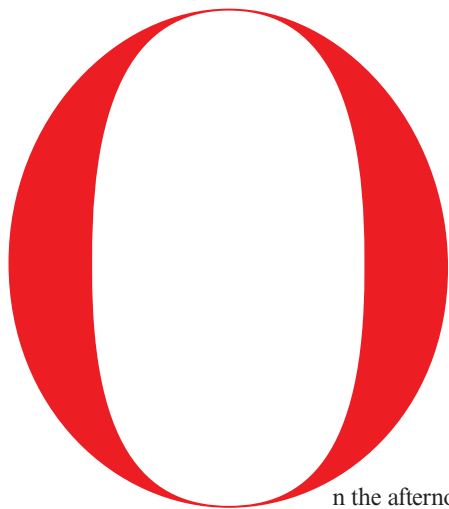
NBC News

that have plagued NBC News since NBCUniversal was bought by
knocked from their ratings thrones. Many blame the new
Others say the rot began earlier, with Williams part of the problem.
helm, BRYAN BURROUGH investigates

NEWSMAKERS

Pat Fili-Krushel,
Brian Williams,
Tom Brokaw, Andy
Lack, Deborah
Turness, and
Steve Burke.





n the afternoon of Wednesday, February 4, the beleaguered head of NBC News, 47-year-old Deborah Turness, dropped into a chair in her boss's office on the third floor of the network's 30 Rockefeller Plaza headquarters. Her boss, Patricia "Pat" Fili-Krushel, oversaw NBC News as well as its cable cousins, CNBC and MSNBC. The two women, both sharp and stylish, were close; Fili, 61, had hired the British-born Turness from a London network 20 months earlier.

It had been a tumultuous period for NBC's news division, as had the entire four years since the Philadelphia cable/phone/Internet giant, Comcast, took over NBC-Universal, as the company is officially known. There was Ann Curry's tearful flameout on *Today*; David Gregory's long slide to his exit from *Meet the Press*; the strange firing after less than three months on the job of Jamie Horowitz, an ESPN executive brought in to fix *Today*; not to mention ratings declines at several of the division's centerpiece shows, including *Today* and *Meet the Press*.

But that afternoon, after a long presentation to 200 NBC advertising salespeople, Turness was feeling better than she had in months. When she had been hired she knew she was stepping onto a troubled ship; finally, she felt, the organizational changes she

had made were showing results. *Meet the Press*'s ratings were edging up; *Nightly News* seemed to be stabilizing. "Things," she told Fili, "feel like they're in a really good place."

Her sense of relief, however, lasted mere minutes. As she left Fili's office around 3:30, Turness learned the startling news: the most important person at the network, the face of NBC News, its anchorman Brian Williams, had apparently been exaggerating an anecdote about coming under fire in a U.S. Army helicopter during the Iraq war in 2003. A reporter from the military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* had called about it that morning. Williams was supposed to talk to him off the record in an effort to determine what the reporter planned to write. Instead, to the dismay of NBC's PR. staff, Williams had gone on the record and admitted he hadn't been telling the truth, not only on a *Nightly News* broadcast the previous week but also over the years at public appearances and on talk shows.

Stunned, Turness was still trying to grasp the gravity of the situation when the *Stars and Stripes* story went online. At that point her biggest concern was the apology Williams was preparing to read to viewers on his broadcast that evening. He was already taping segments as he and Turness began swapping e-mails on its all-important wording. Turness and the other executives who had gotten involved quickly became frustrated, as they would remain for days, with Williams's inability to explain himself. "He couldn't say the words 'I lied,'" recalls one NBC insider. "We could not force his mouth to form the words 'I lied.' He couldn't explain what had happened. [He said,] 'Did something happen to [my] head? Maybe I had a brain tumor, or something in my head?' He just didn't know. We just didn't know. We had no clear sense what had happened. We got the best [apology] we could get."

And that was a problem. Because the apology Williams read on the air that evening not only failed to limit the damage to his reputation, and to NBC News, its elliptical

wording—"I made a mistake in recalling the events of 12 years ago"—made a bad situation worse, inflaming a crisis that led a week later to Williams's suspension for six months. In early March, Pat Fili became the scandal's second victim, pushed aside to make room for a former NBC News chief, Andrew Lack, whose return, network executives fervently hope, will restore morale and bring some much-needed stability to a news division that desperately needs it. Williams's stunning fall was only the worst of a string of embarrassing episodes that have brought NBC News, long one of the gold standards of television news, to its knees.

Since Comcast took control of NBC, the network's news division—famously termed Comcast's "crown jewel" by C.E.O. Brian Roberts—has endured one debacle after another. "When Comcast took over, they had the No. 1 morning show, the No. 1 Sunday show, and the No. 1 evening broadcast," says a former top NBC executive. "That's all completely fallen apart. I don't know how you blame anyone but Comcast and the people it brought in. It's been a nightmare."

Behind the scenes much of the blame has been laid at the feet of three executives: Turness, a British-trained newcomer to U.S. television; Fili, who had virtually no experience in journalism; and Fili's boss, the steely, driven C.E.O. Comcast installed to run NBCUniversal, Steve Burke. Under Burke the network has done well overall—its ratings have rebounded from last to first in the coveted 18–49 demographic, and NBCUniversal's profits were up 18 percent last year—but he and his deputies, their critics charge, time and again proved unable to rein in the news division's high-priced talent. "News is a very particular thing, NBC is a very particular beast, and Deborah, well, she really doesn't have a fucking clue," says a senior NBC executive involved

"I DON'T KNOW HOW YOU
BLAME ANYONE BUT COMCAST....
IT'S BEEN
A NIGHTMARE,"
SAYS A FORMER NBC EXECUTIVE.



PAST TENSE

David Gregory,
Steve Capus, and
Jeff Zucker.

in recent events. “She’s letting the inmates run the asylum. You have kids? Well, if you let them, they’ll have ice cream every night. Same thing in TV. If you let the people on air do what they want, whenever they want, this is what happens.”

“Look. Deborah Turness: I have seen no evidence she knows what she’s doing, but in fairness, she walked into a complete shitstorm there,” says a former top NBC executive. “*Today* is a horror show. Brian Williams? He didn’t give a rat’s ass what Deborah Turness says. But this is fundamentally not a Deborah Turness problem. She’s just a symptom of the problem. . . . This is a Comcast problem.”

Even some of Burke’s defenders admit he has only himself to blame for the decline of NBC News. “Steve has a great track record, and phenomenal DNA, but nobody bats a thousand,” insists one Burke fan. “He’s done a phenomenal job in so many areas. What he did easing out Leno? Unbelievable. But what you’re looking at here is his mistake. Just a huge mistake. I mean, bringing in Pat? Then Deborah? That’s like bad food and small portions.”

Officially, in a damage-control mode where almost no one will be interviewed freely and on the record, NBC News declined comment for this article. Unofficially, its loyalists cooperated extensively. While admitting the occasional misstep, they reject the harsh critiques that have trailed in the wake of the Williams scandal, blaming them on a coterie

of departed executives, including former NBCUniversal C.E.O. Jeff Zucker and former NBC News chief Steve Capus, who resigned under pressure in 2013. “We know the people saying these things about us, and we know why,” one NBC partisan told me. “Because five years later we are still cleaning up the mess they left behind.”

The Place to Be

The long and storied history of NBC News can be traced from the first nightly television newscast in America, in 1940, through pioneering programs on civil rights to the 1960s-era rise of anchors Chet Huntley and David Brinkley. But Huntley’s retirement, in 1970, ushered in a period of lower ratings, and even lower budgets, as the news division suffered a 20-year decline. Ironically, it was perhaps the worst scandal in NBC’s history that laid the groundwork for its incredible turnaround.

In November 1992, NBC’s newsmagazine show *Dateline* aired an hour-long segment purporting to show that the gas tanks on certain kinds of General Motors pickup trucks tended to explode on even low-speed impacts. G.M. responded with an investigation of its own that showed that *Dateline* had rigged the dramatic explosion that was the program’s climax by affixing model-rocket

engines to a truck’s underbody. In the ensuing scandal three *Dateline* producers were fired

and the president of NBC News at the time, Michael Gartner, was forced to resign. Morale hit rock bottom; one NBC executive told *The New York Times*, “Some of us feel this place is like Mogadishu before the Marines landed.”

What followed was a housecleaning that allowed a host of young executives and newspeople to come to the fore and, in doing so, set the stage for what would become a kind of golden age for NBC News. All this was overseen by Gartner’s replacement, a longtime CBS producer named Andy Lack, who had a sharp eye for talent and the confidence to let the young egos of his producers run free. (Note: Lack’s wife, Betsy Kenny Lack, is a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*. She recused herself from editorial input for this article.) Shortly before Lack came in, a new producer, Neal Shapiro, had taken over *Dateline*, and under Lack he made it a consistent winner in its time slot. A year earlier, Tim Russert, who’d once served as chief of staff to Senator Pat Moynihan, was given control of the lackluster *Meet the Press* and turned it into a topical ratings engine and news powerhouse. Most important was the turnaround a twentysomething impresario named Jeff Zucker was able to engineer at the news division’s profit center, *Today*, which in a good year could generate more than \$100 million in profit for NBC’s then corporate parent, General Electric. After the con-

roversial replacement of Jane Pauley in 1989, *Today* had fallen into second place, behind *Good Morning America*. Under Zucker, Bryant Gumbel and Katie Couric took it back to No. 1 in 1995, a position it would maintain for the next 17 years, despite the eventual need to transition to new anchors such as Meredith Vieira and Matt Lauer.

“Andy Lack’s genius was he gave Jeff and Tim and Neal Shapiro the freedom to run,” says a former NBC News executive who worked closely with everyone involved. “Over the next 15 years NBC News really became the envy of the broadcast world. *Today*, *Nightly*, *Meet the Press*: they were all No. 1 [in their categories]. And they really did help set the agenda for the national discussion.”

After Lack’s departure, to Sony Music Entertainment in 2003, Zucker eventually ascended to take control of NBCUniversal, a position he still held in 2009, when the financial crisis prompted General Electric to streamline its far-flung businesses, a strategy that included selling NBCUniversal to Comcast. NBC News executives had been close to G.E. executives, including C.E.O. Jack Welch, but they soon developed a strong sense that Comcast’s top executives, Brian Roberts and Steve Burke, didn’t value the art of talent management quite so highly.

“I always thought they lacked an appreciation for dealing with talent,” says a former NBC executive who worked with Comcast ex-

ecutives during the transition. “Remember: They come from a cable utility company, where all you do is keep your customers happy and collect the bills at the end of the month. To be honest, you got the sense they couldn’t fathom why NBC worried so much about the talent; you know, ‘Why are these people worrying so much about what Matt Lauer thinks?’”

“They didn’t believe in talent management,” says another former executive who worked with Comcast executives. “I’m telling you . . . they just didn’t believe that mattered.”

Murmurs that Comcast executives wouldn’t genuflect before the NBC News stars were widespread as Steve Burke took control of NBCUniversal in the first weeks of 2011. Burke, the son of the legendary Capital Cities C.E.O. Daniel Burke, was viewed as a highly capable, no-nonsense type who wouldn’t be easily swayed by the glamour of television news. “Just look at Steve Burke’s eyes,” says one NBC executive who worked closely with him. “He is a cold, calculating guy.”

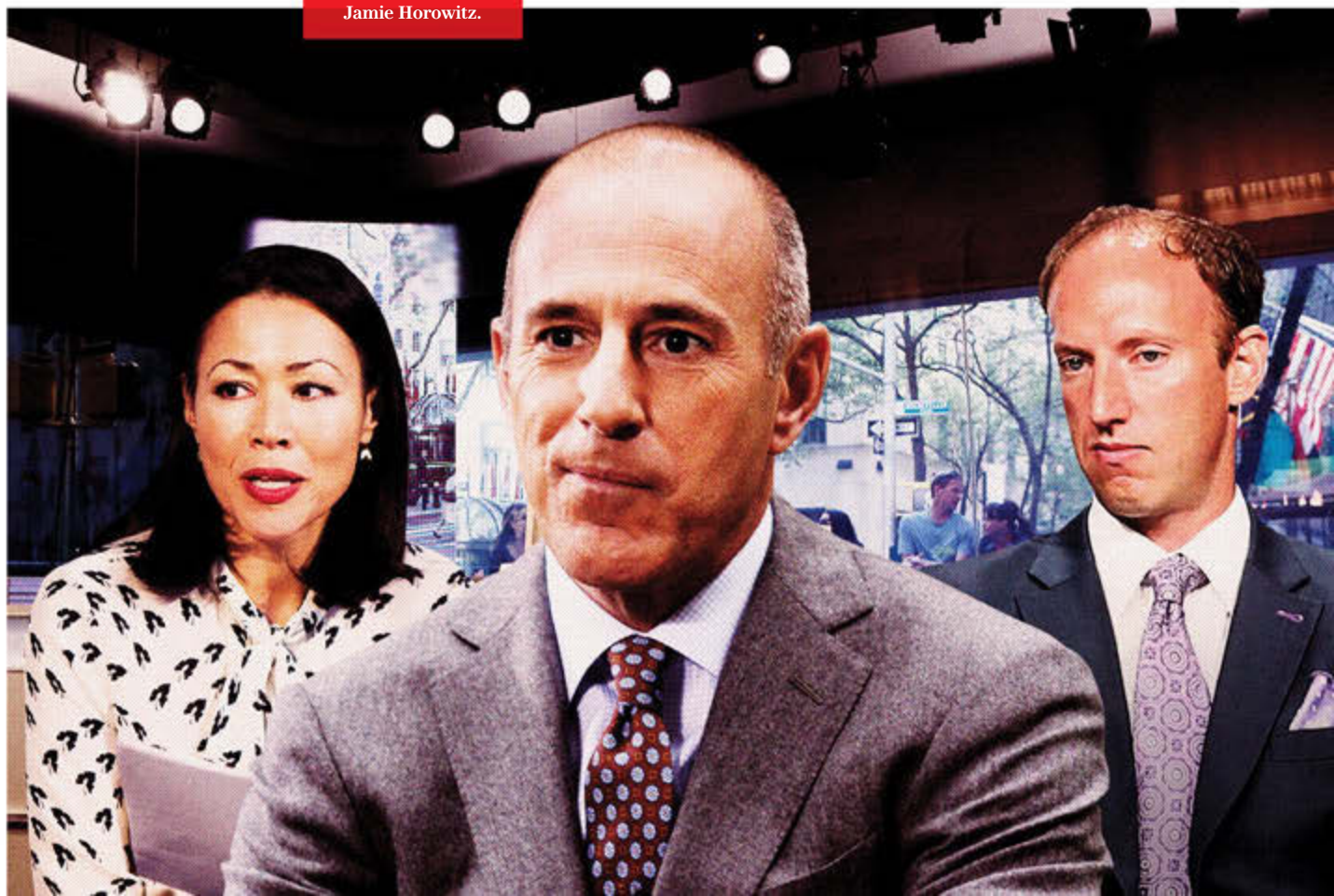
“Burke actually started out O.K.,” this executive goes on. “Matt [Lauer], within a matter of weeks [of Burke’s coming], said he did not want to renew his contract. And to Burke’s great credit, he built enough of a relationship

then with Lauer that Lauer began to feel he could be trusted. And when Burke agreed to his enormous demands, north of \$20 million a year, he kept Matt.”

According to one view, the Burke administration’s troubles at NBC News can be traced to the Ann Curry episode at *Today*, a messy situation it inherited from the Zucker regime. Line executives were sharply split over Curry’s desire to ascend from newsreader to Lauer’s on-air partner. The head of news, Steve Capus, was in favor; *Today*’s executive producer, Jim Bell, and Matt Lauer were wary. Capus prevailed, only to watch Curry’s ratings slide. By June 2012, when she memorably and tearfully announced her departure from *Today*, Capus and Bell were not speaking. “That’s where this whole thing begins to fall apart,” says the onetime executive. “Burke was the principal player [who made the decision to demote her], though he hid desperately behind this. Finally he makes a deal for her to go away and then gets cold feet about pushing her to announce it. Despite pleas from everyone, Burke would not push the situation. He just felt uncomfortable doing it, and he wouldn’t explain why. Which leads directly to this thing being a national ‘Oh, poor Ann Curry’ story, which was the furthest thing from the truth.”

The Curry saga convinced Burke that the news division under Steve Capus’s direction was broadly dysfunctional. “The prevailing line from the Comcast people when Steve

HERE TODAY ...
Ann Curry, Matt
Lauer, and
Jamie Horowitz.



“JAMIE [HOROWITZ] RAN INTO
MATT LAUER—IT’S AS SIMPLE AS THAT,”
SAYS AN NBC OBSERVER.
“DON’T BELIEVE
ANYTHING ELSE.”

Capus was in charge was all News needs is a real grown-up in there,” says a top NBC executive at the time. “You know, ‘These people don’t know how to run a business. What they need is organization. Change the structure, business development, better H.R., get some women in there.’ I mean, that’s verbatim. That was the script.” Bell was removed from the equation when Burke gave him the Olympics to supervise, but Burke wanted deeper changes. Insiders believe he found the Curry episode so distasteful that he resolved to distance himself from the details of talent management altogether. “This thing exploded into a soap opera, and let me tell you, it scared the hell out of Steve Burke,” recalls an executive who met with Burke regularly. “And that’s not a phrase you use about a tough guy like Burke. But I saw it.”

It was then that Burke initiated a corporate reorganization that laid the groundwork for the many problems that followed. In July 2012, Comcast announced NBC News, MSNBC, and CNBC were to be combined into an enlarged news division that, to the surprise of many staffers, would be run by Burke’s trusted deputy, Patricia Fili-Krushel. “Burke didn’t want to deal with the details of handling talent,” says another former top NBC executive. “And he didn’t want to deal with MSNBC and CNBC either. So he takes care of everything in one fell swoop. He creates this new news group, throws in MSNBC and CNBC, and gives it all to Pat to run. Problem solved. One group, you know, actually not a bad idea. Putting Pat in charge? Terrible idea.”

Today, in the wake of the Williams fiasco, Pat Fili has emerged as a popular punching bag inside NBC. Fili started her career at ABC as a secretary “back when they still called them secretaries,” as one of her friends puts it, during the 1970s; one of her first bosses was Bob Iger, now the her-

alded chairman of Disney. It was Iger, then a production supervisor, who insisted to his superiors that Fili take his job when he was promoted. (He remains a mentor to her.) “The thing that most impressed me about Pat is that, in addition to being smart, tough, and knowledgeable, she is an adult,” says Dick Parsons, former chairman and C.E.O. of Time Warner. “She always parked her ego at the door and gave her full focus and attention to solving the problem at hand.” In the ensuing years she climbed the ladder at the network, becoming head of ABC Daytime during the 1990s. It was there that she met Burke, who 15 years later, when he got to NBC, hired her away from Time Warner, where she was supervising human resources, among other areas. That is essentially what Burke initially assigned her to do at NBC. When he named her to oversee news, the one glaring omission on her impressive résumé was anything to do with journalism.

“Pat’s a very nice person, smart, very empathetic, but she’s in way over her head,” an admirer told me in February. “She knows nothing about any of the things she is managing [at NBC].”

“You have to understand something about Comcast,” says another recently departed NBC executive. “There’s practically no attention paid to actual domain expertise—like, zero. The fact of the matter is, in certain businesses, certain things matter. If you’re going to be made the head of a shoe business, you need to actually know that shoes need to be sourced and designed. In the big corporate vision of NBCU, there’s almost no regard for that line of thinking. If you fit into a mold, if you fulfill a loyalty obligation or a don’t-make-waves obligation, or if you can just be pegged into the Comcast pegboard, you get to be in charge of stuff. That’s Pat.”

By all accounts Steve Capus was less than thrilled to find himself reporting to Fili. When he resigned, six months later, news reports made it sound as if he had been fed up. In fact, NBC partisans say, Capus

was pressured to leave, in part because Fili felt he was feuding with just about everyone else who reported to her. But there was another reason for Capus’s exit, these insiders say. Though Capus had worked closely with Brian Williams for 15 years, it turns out the anchorman also had a role in his leaving.

War Stories

One might expect that, in the wake of Williams’s suspension, his colleagues would be brimming with stories of other fanciful tales he told. That’s not the case. There are a few tales, it’s true, but when asked for the unvarnished truth about Williams, the two topics people at NBC News return to again and again are these: his prowess as a bureaucratic infighter and his limited interest in the kind of “heavy” news topics and investigative pieces that had long been championed by such NBC stalwarts as Tom Brokaw and Tim Russert.

“What always bothered Tim was Brian’s lack of interest in things that mattered most, that were front and center, like politics and world events,” says a person who knew both men well. “Brian has very little interest in politics. It’s not in his blood. What Brian cares about is logistics, the weather, and planes and trains and helicopters.”

“You know what interested Brian about politics?” marvels one longtime NBC correspondent, recently departed. “Brian was obsessed with whether Mitt Romney wore the Mormon underwear.” (A supporter says that this characterization is unfair and that Williams reads deeply and broadly, especially about history and politics.)

Williams took the anchor chair in December 2004, after a career handling the news at local stations and MSNBC; though he had worked as NBC’s chief White House correspondent for two years, he was never a foreign or war correspondent. He was deeply insecure about this, some of his

friends believe. These people suggest that his storied broadcasts from New Orleans in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which proved a boon to his ratings, were in part an effort to overcome the perception that he was a journalistic lightweight. In his first years on *Nightly News*, several colleagues say, Williams's weaknesses were kept in check by other strong figures at the network, from Brokaw and Russert to Capus and a *Nightly News* executive producer named John Reiss. With the departures of each of these men, especially Russert, who died in 2008, Williams slowly consolidated his power.

“There is NBC News before Tim died and after Tim died,” says the recently departed correspondent. “Tim was our soul, our conscience. . . . When Tim died, and Brian pushed out John Reiss, there was no one who could influence Brian in a significant way, who could say, ‘Goddammit, Brian, you have to do this.’”

In the years that followed, NBC's two best-known investigative correspondents, Michael Isikoff and Lisa Myers, both left the network, in large part, insiders say, because Williams had little interest in their work. “By 2007, 2008, Brian was starting to feel his oats a bit,” says a onetime NBC executive who knows him well. “It was a bit of a challenge, not huge. Manageable. He was more reluctant to go on difficult assignments. He didn't want to leave New York. Getting him to war zones was real tough . . . but when he did go, he came back with these great stories that kind of put himself at the center of things. Then the Comcast crew arrived and everything began to change.”

The venue where several top NBC executives witnessed Williams's efforts at corporate politics firsthand was the 51st-floor executive dining room, which Burke had spruced up and encouraged them to use.

“If Brian could've eaten there eight days

a week he would've,” says another onetime NBC executive. “He would hold court at some table, with some poor mid-level schmo who didn't know what was going on, and he always seemed to be there when Steve Burke would come in. And [with Burke in earshot], he would make a point of taking someone down a notch. It could be Pat or Steve [Capus] or [P.R. chief] Adam [Miller] or someone else, but over time it got to be Steve Capus a lot. Brian took Steve down. I heard those lunches. I know what he said. He got Burke and Pat Fili very riled up about Steve.”

Capus had a number of issues, including a combative streak and a temper. But those who watched Williams in action think he “very quickly came to believe that he was the person running the news division, not Capus,” says one of the former NBC executives quoted above. “As Capus was kind of dissed more and more to and by Burke and, ultimately, Pat Fili, Brian just saw that as an opportunity to run a truck through the news division and get whatever he wanted. Suddenly he's appearing on all these shows, *Jimmy Fallon* and *30 Rock* and everything else. This spread the idea in Brian's mind that he was this kind of newsman-entertainer. That he was a national raconteur.”

Entertainment News

For a while, he was. In fact, as an excellent article by Gabriel Sherman in *New York* magazine recounted, Williams had long displayed an ambivalence with continuing in the anchor chair. With his abundant charisma and disarming wit, what he truly wanted, it appears, was his own talk show. According to *New York*, he talked to Steve Burke about succeeding Jay Leno. When Burke refused, Williams reportedly pitched Les Moonves, at CBS, to replace David Letterman, who was soon to retire. Moonves also allegedly declined. Though his appearances on shows

such as *30 Rock* and *Jimmy Fallon* successfully repositioned Williams as a good-humored Everyman—and thus expanded not only his own brand but that of *Nightly News*—they were not popular among many of his colleagues.

“He goes on Tina Fey and *Jimmy Fallon* and all that, that's where his heart was, and [at NBC] that's seen as running away from the news division,” says a former NBC executive.

A Williams partisan disagrees. “The irony is that the very things people are criticizing Brian for now were the things they loved most about him at the time, the fact that by going on all these shows, with their young audiences, he was building bridges to the younger people who weren't watching network news anymore,” this person says. “It was something the previous generation of anchormen, like Brokaw, hadn't been able to do. Brian was doing it.”

After refusing Williams the Leno spot, Steve Burke offered him a consolation prize: his own magazine show, *Rock Center*, a bid to anchor what he hoped would be the second coming of *60 Minutes*. It wasn't. *Rock Center* debuted in 2011 to tepid reviews and worse ratings. Its journalistic efforts received less notice than its stunt hiring of Chelsea Clinton, whose signature contribution was the interview she did with the Geico Gecko that appeared on the show's Web site.

Rock Center's death came three months after Steve Capus finally resigned under pressure from Pat Fili, in February 2013. (Capus is now executive editor of CBS News.) With Capus gone, however, it was not Williams but Fili who snapped up an opportunity to place her own stamp on NBC News. She launched an ambitious international search for a replacement for Capus. “I hadn't heard of Deb Turness, but what I heard I liked,” says a former NBC executive. “What I heard over and over again was: this is a classic Pat Fili hire, a very expensive, not very protracted global search, with a stellar candidate who

“BRIAN COULDN'T EXPLAIN WHAT HAD
HAPPENED. [HE SAID,] ‘DID
SOMETHING HAPPEN
TO [MY] HEAD?
MAYBE I HAD A BRAIN TUMOR, OR SOMETHING?’”

nobody has really worked with here, and good for Pat—she found a great woman, a highly qualified non-white male. Good for Pat. It was bulletproof.”

Or, as it happened, not.

Deborah Turness is a feisty, hard-charging, tabloid-loving British media figure. When Fili came calling, she was the top editor at ITV News in London, where the news programs she supervised consistently humbled rivals at the BBC. A hip, sinewy blonde, she had once been married to a roadie for the Clash and had competed in a Beijing-to-Paris road race. *The New York Times* quoted a former colleague, who said she brought “a bit of rock-chick swagger to a newsroom full of middle-aged men.” The early reviews, at least publicly, were glowing. Williams called her a “dynamo.” NBC correspondent Andrea Mitchell says, “Deborah is very creative, very competitive, and very ambitious in the best sense of the word. I think it’s been an impressive retooling.”

Behind the scenes, things weren’t going as smoothly. Even NBC loyalists acknowledge that Turness’s introduction to the realities of U.S. broadcast news was rocky. “One thing she didn’t really know about was talent management,” admits an executive who admires Turness. “I remember early on I asked her how many journalists she had supervised [in London] who made a million dollars a year. She said one. And she didn’t understand that you communicate [with the talent] through their agents. Like if [WME co-C.E.O.] Ari Emanuel calls, you have to phone back the same day. So I remember we had to kind of calm Ari down. Once all that was worked out, she caught on fairly quickly.”

“It was almost unfair to give Deborah this job,” says one NBC observer. “She was basically overmatched. From day one, it was difficult, even just managing the daily job. Because it’s a big job, it’s got a lot of intricate parts to it, and you know she had a rough time with it. She was not terribly accessible. People came out of meetings and said she’s overwhelmed.” One NBC insider terms Turness’s early performance “a hot mess.” Another adds, “She was trying to do so much; she was all over the place, like she had A.D.D., and that caused a lot of stress for everyone.”

Turness’s presentations were a model of 21st-century media and corporate jargon and synergies. Like Fili an ardent believer in market research, she tasked all her shows with drafting mission statements, “content plans,” and “brand filters,” which, along

with an emphasis on finding ways to “monetize” news programming, prompted much eye-rolling among NBC’s old-timers. In an effort to drag NBC into the Digital Age—it has been a notable laggard—Turness pushed for more digital content and far more cooperation among programs. This all sounds smart enough, but many in the news division didn’t appreciate the perception they were behind the times, especially when Turness, in an interview with *The New York Times*, was quoted saying, “People in the organization from top to bottom recognized that NBC News hadn’t kept up with the times in all sorts of ways, for maybe 15 years. I think the organization had gone to sleep.” Even Fili and others who backed Turness cringed at the quote, which angered many staffers. “That didn’t help,” acknowledges one admirer. “I do think that set her back.”

For all the digital chatter, though, Turness’s top priority was stabilizing *Today*, whose ratings had gone into free fall as many viewers blamed Matt Lauer for the Ann Curry debacle. Turness spent her first six months focused on the show, and in time the ratings drop subsided, and *Today* settled in at No. 2, behind *Good Morning America*. At that point, last winter, she turned her attention to *Meet the Press*, whose ratings under David Gregory had fallen to a 20-year low. The show rarely broke news, and Gregory seemed uncomfortable in the host’s chair. Turness led marathon strategy sessions in Washington, spitballing myriad ways to spice up the aging franchise, several of which were later lampooned in a long article in *Washingtonian* magazine. Among her ideas was bringing in a live audience or celebrity guests or even a band. “If you could bring in Angelina Jolie to talk about an issue, or George Clooney on the Sudan, that could work,” an NBC partisan says today. “She wanted to play a South African song about Nelson Mandela over the credits when Mandela died. That’s not crazy.”

As word of Turness’s efforts to turn around *Meet the Press* spread, others at NBC, most notably the political savant Chuck Todd and MSNBC’s Joe Scarborough, began jockeying to replace Gregory. By last spring blind items to this effect were appearing in so many gossip columns that Fili telephoned Todd’s agent and told him to cut it out; the agent denied being involved. Once this all became public, it led to a perception among Turness’s critics that she was letting Gregory twist in the wind. When she finally fired him, last summer, it was widely viewed as a mercy killing. “What she did to David, that’s just unforgivable,” says one

Gregory supporter. This criticism, however, misses a central point. By installing Chuck Todd in Gregory’s place, Turness may have saved the show. In February, *Meet the Press* returned, briefly, to No. 1.

Morning Sickness

By then Turness had turned her focus back to *Today*. She and Fili, wanting some fresh eyes, decided to bring in an outsider to devise a turnaround strategy, a brash 38-year-old ESPN producer named Jamie Horowitz. Last May, in an internal memo announcing his hiring, Turness termed Horowitz “a visionary leader,” a bit of a stretch for a young executive known mostly for shepherding two ESPN shows: Keith Olbermann’s ESPN2 program and a football show hosted by Colin Cowherd. Some felt Horowitz’s hiring was a tacit admission that Turness wasn’t up to the task of fixing *Today* herself. “Come on!” barks one critic. “Anybody with a triple-digit I.Q. who interviews somebody to come in as president of NBC News you ask, ‘What are you going to do with the 800-pound gorilla? With *Today*?’ And Deborah’s answer was ‘You hire Jamie Horowitz!’ It was almost like it was Deborah’s cry for help. Like if you’re overwhelmed and you don’t have a lot of confidence or vision, you bring in other people: ‘Help me, I’m drowning.’”

After a protracted negotiation to break his contract at ESPN—Pat Fili got Bob Iger (Disney owns ESPN) to intervene on NBC’s behalf—Horowitz wasn’t allowed to formally start at NBC until December, though he could begin working off the premises in September.

There are two sharply different versions of Horowitz’s brief tenure as an executive vice president of NBC News: One offering considerable detail is put forth by NBC partisans; this version paints Horowitz as a cocky, trash-talking loose cannon who avidly leaked to the press. An alternative version suggests that Horowitz was torpedoed by Matt Lauer and his allies at *Today*, who feared the changes he sought. The truth appears to contain elements of both versions.

As Fili told other executives, her initial inkling of trouble came during Horowitz’s first week on the job, in a chat with Williams. As one insider describes it, “Brian had dinner with Jamie . . . [and] Brian says Jamie threw Deborah Turness under the bus on something. I think they were disagreeing on a promo, and Jamie said something like ‘If you need help with Deborah, I can handle this for you.’ So Pat calls Jamie, like right away, and says, ‘So you threw Deborah under the bus with Brian?’ And he doesn’t even flinch. He

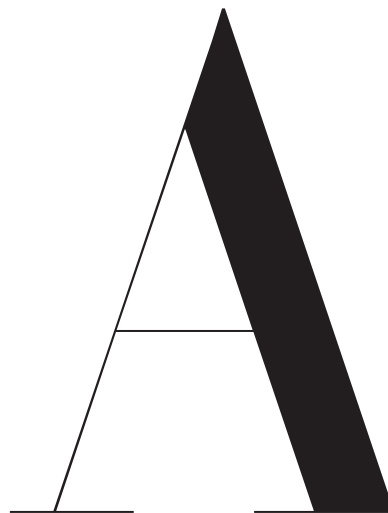
denies it. The more Pat thought about it, the madder she got. She called him the next day and said, 'I don't know how it was at ESPN, but it doesn't work that way here. Here, we're a team.' And Jamie's words were 'Message received.'"

In the following days, loyalists say, both Fili and Turness heard disquieting reports that Horowitz was openly speculating about changes on *Today* with outside agents and attorneys, generating corrosive rumors. Gossip items began to appear. Turness mentioned her concerns to Fili, who relayed her own to Steve Burke, but, for the moment, Horowitz was allowed to arrange focus groups to study how viewers felt about *Today's* on-air personalities. Nonetheless every week, the loyalists say, seemed to bring some new issue: Turness grew irked when Horowitz repeatedly refused to attend her daily planning meetings. He told her Matt Lauer was buying into many of his ideas, but when asked Lauer denied it, saying, "The jury's still out." In October, roughly six weeks into Horowitz's tenure, Fili told Burke, according to one insider, "We need to have a come-to-Jesus meeting with Jamie."

For Turness, NBC partisans say, the final straw came after she and Lauer quietly secured a major interview for *Today*: the wife of N.F.L. running back Ray Rice, Janay Palmer, whom Rice had infamously punched in the face in an episode that ignited a national debate over spousal abuse. The "get" remained secret for several days, sources say, until Horowitz asked a *Today* producer about it. Hours later, news of the interview appeared on the TMZ sports Web site. In an e-mail, Turness told Horowitz she was "very unhappy" about the leak. According to an insider, Horowitz responded, "I hope you don't think I leaked that." Turness replied: "I don't know what to think." (A spokesman for Horowitz says he never leaked any NBC items to other media sources.)

The Rice incident convinced Turness she could no longer trust Horowitz. She told other executives she feared speaking openly in front of him, according to several insiders. This was the situation on Tuesday, November 11, NBC loyalists say, when Horowitz made his long-awaited six-hour presentation to Turness on the changes he envisioned at *Today*. Working with a white magnetic board, Horowitz urged a half-dozen personnel changes, including the dismissal of Willie Geist and Natalie Morales, grooming his old ESPN pal Josh Elliott to replace Lauer, and beefing up the role of Hoda Kotb, CONTINUED ON PAGE 171

HAROLD BLOOM'S CANON FIRE



at age 84, having written more than 40 books and taught literature at Yale for 59 years, Harold Bloom is pretty much entitled to make any pronouncements he (god)damn well feels like making. Would you care to go mano a mano with him on—say—the "Gnostic anarch-archon cleaving asunder of the cosmic androgyne"? Or on whether "Whitman's complex metric stems from Hebrew parallelism"? Go for it. Me, I'd sooner challenge Moses to a game of rock-paper-scissors on his way down Mount Sinai.

Oh, what a lovely, howling shitstorm Professor Bloom's latest slab of a tablet, *The Daemon Knows: Literary Greatness and the American Sublime* (Spiegel & Grau/Random House), is going to stir up in Litworld this spring. And oh what fun it's going to be to watch. Teeth will gnash. Garments will be rent. Loud will be the lamentations.

What's all the fuss? Brace yourself: Bloom has the cheek to enumerate America's 12 greatest writers. He's not so crass, simplistic, or obvious as to say "greatest." Rather, they are "the dozen creators of the American Sublime." And now that you've braced, strap yourself in tight, because they're all (a) dead, (b) white, and (c) Anglo-Christian, and 11 out of 12 are male.

We're talking: Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry James, Mark Twain, Robert Frost, Wallace Stevens, T. S. Eliot, William Faulkner, and Hart Crane.

Before the Molotov cocktails start flying through dear old Mother Yale's stained glass, might we at least stipulate—if only *en bref* and *en passant*—that such a list ain't chopped liver? Some might even call it a pantheon. Might we also stipulate that Harold Bloom, though he demurely calls himself a "worn-out ancient exegete," is, lit-crit-wise, our resident Owl of Minerva?

Now that we've settled *that*, let the shouting begin. There's enough in here to outrage the votaries and vestals of every ism and sensibility under the American sun and moon. Feminists will shriek, multiculturalists will huff, and gay literati will ululate in despair despite Bloom's idolatry of their champion.

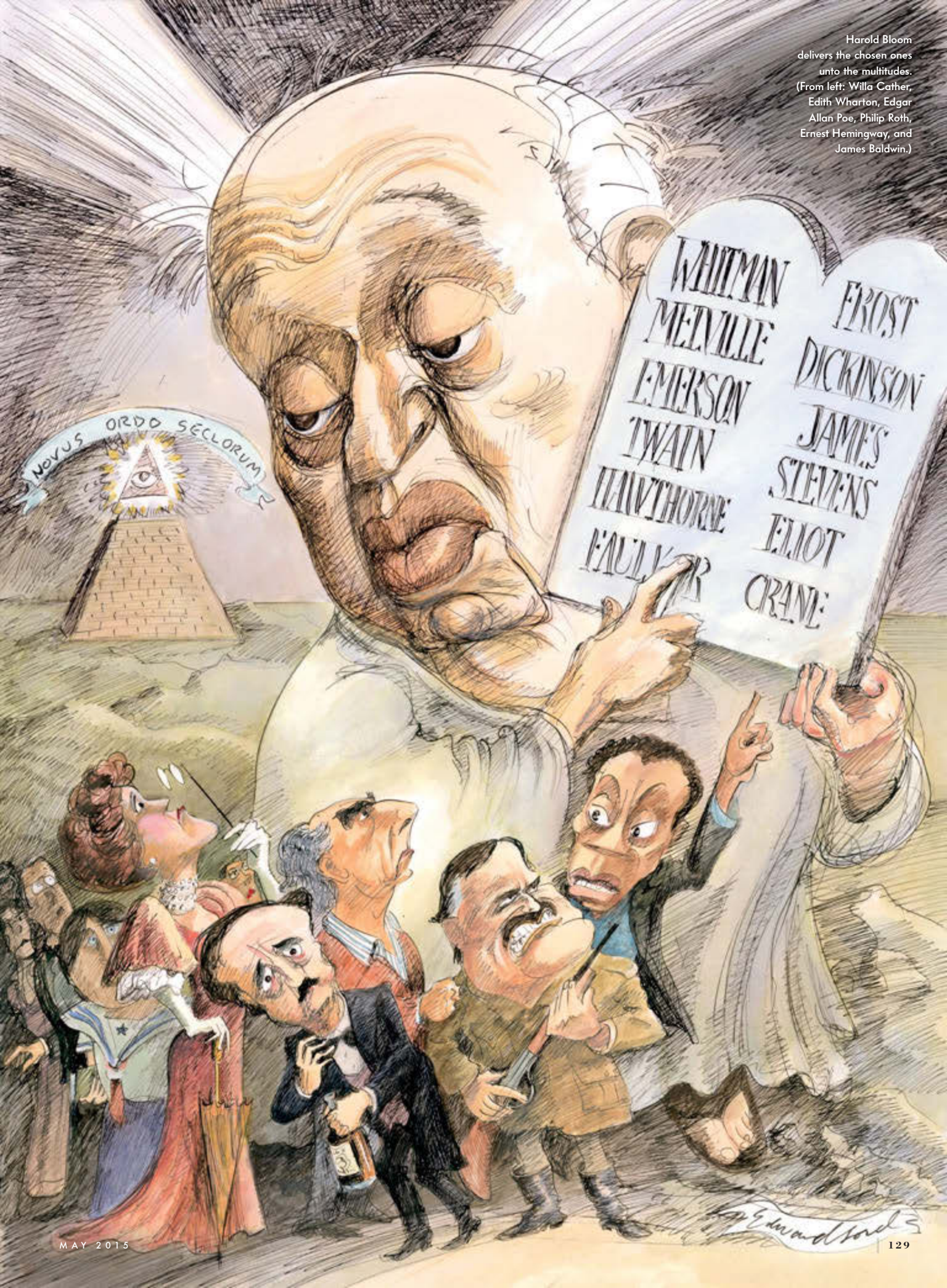
Why?

"Whitman learned . . . that only an intransitive eros would accommodate his daemon, which celebrated contact but could not bear it. I am accustomed to being drubbed on this matter by a self-declared school of homosexual poe-ficians who generously attribute their achieved gay lives to Walt Whitman."

What could be more straightforward?

—CHRISTOPHER BUCKLEY

Harold Bloom
delivers the chosen ones
unto the multitudes.
(From left: Willa Cather,
Edith Wharton, Edgar
Allan Poe, Philip Roth,
Ernest Hemingway, and
James Baldwin.)



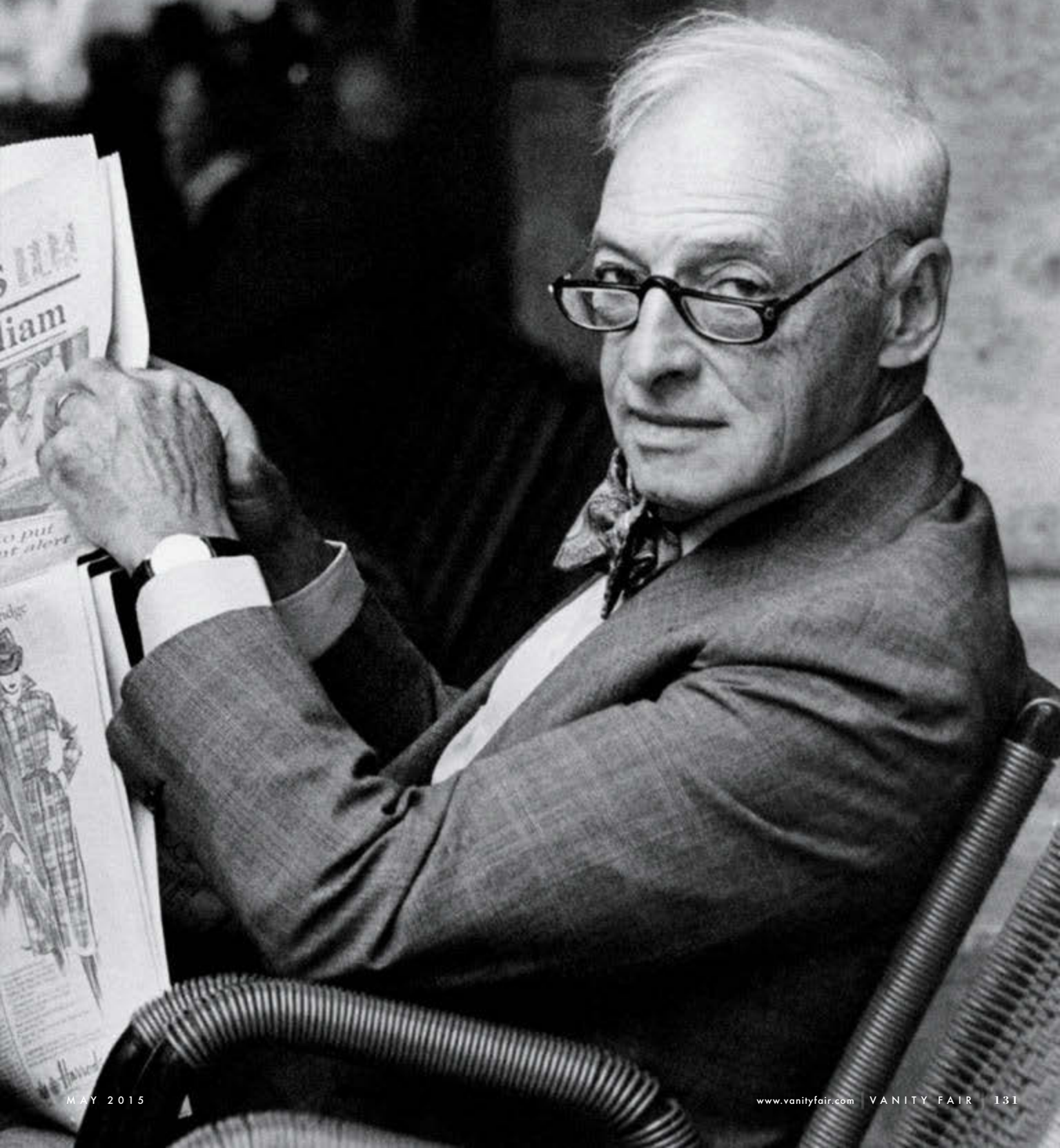
Bellow's

Perhaps the most lauded novelist in American history, Saul Bellow was as irresistible as his prose when he burst onto the literary scene, in the 1940s. With the publication of the first volume of Zachary Leader's Bellow biography, MARTIN AMIS explores the interplay of the Nobel Prize-winning writer's life and work, in which the search for love—spanning four decades, four divorces, and numberless affairs—was by far the greater challenge



Gift

NOVEL IDEAL
Saul Bellow in
Capri, Italy, to
accept the
Malaparte Prize,
September 1984.



When Saul Bellow emerged and solidified as an intellectual presence—in Chicago and New York during the 1940s—he seemed formidably, enviably, indeed inexcusably well equipped to flourish in the spheres of literature and love. “Extremely handsome,” according to one observer; “stunning,” “beautiful,” “irresistible,” according to others. After his first novel appeared, in 1944, Bellow got a call from MGM: although he was too soulful-looking for a male lead, they explained, he could prosper as the type “who loses the girl to . . . George Raft or Errol Flynn.” We may be sure that Bellow hardly listened. And it doesn’t sound quite right for him, does it—aping a series of sexual inadequates (Ashley to Gable’s Rhett?), in makeup and fancy dress, under the hot stare of the kliegs?

No, from the start Bellow radiated what Alfred Kazin called in his 1978 memoir, *New York Jew*, “a sense of his destiny as a novelist that excited everyone around him.” Electrically sensitive to criticism, Bellow had a chip on his shoulder—but it was what one critic called “the chip of self-confidence.” As Kazin wrote, “He expected the world to come to him.” And it did. To quote from the opening sentence of Zachary Leader’s magisterial biography *The Life of Saul Bellow: To Fame and Fortune, 1915–1964*, Bellow would go on to become “the most decorated writer in American history.” He faced only one serious obstruction, and this vanished, as if at a snap

of the fingers, on a certain day in 1949, when he was 33 and discovered “what I had been born for.” As for women and love, on the other hand, he didn’t get it right until 1986, when he was 71.

To round out the panoply of the young Bellow’s attractions, he had about him the glamour and gravitas of turbulent exoticism. When his family crossed the Atlantic from Russia (St. Petersburg) to Canada (Lachine, then Montreal) in the early teens of the century, Saul was no more than a twinkle in his father’s eye. Well, Abraham’s eyes were capable of twinkling; far more typically, though, they blazed and seeped with frustration and rage. A versatile business flop, he struggled as a farmer, a wholesaler, a marriage broker, a junk dealer, and a bootlegger. “His talent,” Saul would later write, “was for failure.” Bellow Sr. eventually thrived (peddling fuel to bakeries), but he got angrier as he aged, and had fistfights in the street well into his 60s. The aggression was intelligible: Abraham knew what it was to wear the moral equivalent of the Star; Russian autocracy had condemned him to outlawry, imprisonment, ruin, and flight; later, too, he lost three sisters to the mechanized anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany.

In the end, Abraham was grateful to America (and even came to enjoy the novelty of paying his taxes), yet his assimilation was always fragmentary. “Wright me,” he wrote to Saul, late in life: “A Ledder. Still I am The Head of all of U.” And his wife, vague, frail, dreamy Liza, a figure of quiet pathos, simply didn’t live long enough to adapt. As Leader records (and this is a typically luminous detail): “A great treat for Liza was a movie matinee on the weekend. Bellow sometimes accompanied her and remembered a low rumbling in the theater, that of dozens of child translators, himself included, whispering in Yiddish to their mothers.”

Home life, then, was archaic, violent, loud-mouthed, and “wholly Jewish.” A mixed blessing, you might say, but that’s the kind of blessing that all writers hold most dear.

At the start of 1924, Abraham made his

way to Chicago, and six months later the rest of the family was “smuggled across the border by bootlegging associates,” arriving on the Fourth of July in the capital of American “hard-boiledness” (Bellow’s epithet). And of all the “reality instructors” who lined up to shape Saul’s sensibility, the most dominant was that exemplary Chicagoan, Maury, the oldest of the brothers. Maury bestrides Bellow’s fiction, making no fewer than five undisguised appearances—as Simon (*The Adventures of Augie March*), Shura (*Herzog*), Philip (“Him with His Foot in His Mouth”), Julius (*Humboldt’s Gift*), and Albert (“Something to Remember Me By”). “You don’t understand

SAUL OF FAME

Saul Bellow receives his Nobel Prize in Stockholm, 1976. *Inset*, the Bellow family in Montreal, circa 1920: from left, Saul, Liza, Jane, Abraham, Maury, and Sam.



FROM THE START SAUL BELLOW
RADIATED “A SENSE OF HIS
DESTINY AS A NOVELIST
THAT EXCITED EVERYONE AROUND HIM.”



fire: he is something like a super-charged plagiarist of Creation.

In his dealings with women he could be glacially passive, and he could be skittishly precipitate. “Somewhere in every intellectual,” the brutal lawyer, Sandor, tells Herzog, “is a dumb prick.” Bellow would have wholeheartedly agreed.

He got engaged to his first wife, Anita, in 1937; he was 21. And the only surprise is that the relationship took so long to wind down—after 15 years, 22 changes of address, and numberless infidelities.

“I have no intention,” he then wrote to his agent in 1955, “of bouncing from divorce into marriage.” But that of course was exactly what he did, homing in, despite a fusillade of warning shots, on the naïve and volatile Sasha. Early on, a female friend noted that Bellow “was the kind of man who thought he could change women. . . . And he couldn’t. I mean, who can? You don’t.” This is well said. But one surmises that the answer, if there is one, had more to do with literature than with life.

Happiness, noted Montherlant, writes white; it is invisible on the page. And the same is true of goodness. Anita was upstanding and altruistic, and is therefore a pallid presence in the novels; Sasha, by contrast, would be mythologized, demonized, and immortalized in *Herzog* as the terrifying emascualatrix, Mady. The terms of divorce No. 2 were settled in 1961, and within a month he was married to the equally glossy and unpromising Susan. It seems that his creative unconscious was attracted to difficulty—to make his fiction write black. This time he did at least manage an interlude of what Leader calls “strenuous womanizing”: he returned from a tour of Europe “trailed by letters not

fuck-all,” Albert characteristically informs his bookish kid brother. “You never will.” Originally a bagman (and a skimmer), Maury married money and set about amassing a fortune in that hyperactively venal fringe between business and politics (one of the guests at his daughter’s wedding was Jimmy Hoffa). As he saw it, all other concerns were mere snags in the engine of materialism.

“Enough of this old crap about being Jewish,” Maury used to say. In *Herzog* (1964), when the hero weeps at his father’s funeral, the senior brother, Shura, snarls at him, “Don’t carry on like a goddamn immigrant.” Brazen American plenitude was what Maury championed and embodied—with his “suburban dukedom,” his 100 pairs of shoes and 300 suits. When Bellow won the Nobel, in 1976, Maury was at first affronted (“I’m really the smart one” was his attitude), then indifferent, despite a brief interest in the prize money—Was it tax-free? Could Saul stow it offshore? Yet Maury, a secret reader, harbored depth and convolution, and Bellow always believed that there was something tragic, something blind, headlong, and oblivion-seeking, in his drivenness. It was the revenge life takes on the man who knowingly chooses lucre over love.

And what about Bellow and love—the many affairs, the many marriages? Before we turn to them, we have to acknowledge a unique peculiarity of Bellow’s art. When we say that this or that character is “based on” or “inspired by” this or that real-life original, we indulge in evasion. The characters are their originals, as we see from the family *froideurs*, the threatened lawsuits, the scandalized friends, and the embittered ex-wives. Leader deals with this crux immediately, in his introduction, and partly endorses the verdict of James Wood (one of Bellow’s most sensitive critics), which invokes “an awkward but undeniable utilitarianism. . . . The number of people hurt by Bellow is probably no more than can be counted on two hands, yet he has delighted and consoled and altered the lives of thousands of readers.” Bellow himself conceded that the question was “diabolically complex.” But who in the end would wish things otherwise? That the characters come alive, or remain alive, on the page is not the result of artistic control so much as the sheer visionary affect of the prose. Bellow is *sui generis* and Promethean, a thief of the gods’



British-expat enclaves across America are in revolt, furious over a recent move to halt the import of U.K.-manufactured Cadbury chocolate. The villain is Hershey, which licenses the Cadbury name for chocolate made in the U.S.—chocolate the Brits disdain as tasting like “spit-up,” or worse. BRUCE HANDY discovers it’s not just a nostalgic English childhood treat that’s under siege but an entire way of life, on both sides of the Atlantic

Little Shop Ac



SWEETS EMOTION

Sean Kavanagh-Dowsett and Nicola Perry, activists in the pro-U.K.-Cadbury cause, photographed at their English-import grocery, Carry On Tea & Sympathy, in Greenwich Village, New York.

STYLED BY ALICIA LOMBARINI; HAIR, MAKEUP AND GROOMING BY BIRGITTE. FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS

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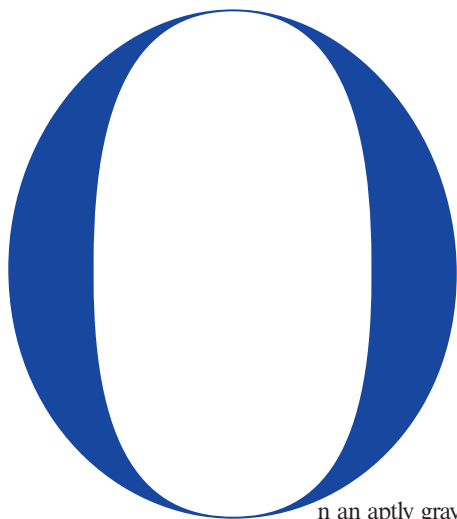
MAY 2015

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JONATHAN BECKER

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He desperately wanted something more filling and satisfying than cabbage and cabbage soup. The one thing he longed for more than anything else was . . . CHOCOLATE.

—From *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by Roald Dahl.



In an aptly gray, England-imitative day in March, Tea & Sympathy, the little Greenwich Village tearoom and British grocery, was bustling, full of customers, crosstalk, laughter, people shouting into their phones. This cheerful cacophony had a visual complement in the store's wooden shelves, heavy with a jumble of vintage tea sets and imported cans of Heinz baked beans, Lyle's Black Treacle, Hobnobs, Percy Pigs, and Ambrosia Devon Custard. The shop's raucousness seemed a natural extension of its proprietress, Nicola Perry, a 55-year-old native Londoner with big eyes, fly-away gray hair, a bawdy sense of humor, and a habit of speaking in exclamation points. Perry, known as Nicky, is something of a neighborhood institution—as is Tea & Sympathy, celebrating its “silver jubilee,” or 25th anniversary, this year. The restaurant looks exactly like the kind of old-fashioned, curtained, sweetly dowdy tearoom you might have once found in any provincial postwar

British town, and, though its reputation as a fashion-world hot spot endures, it remains a destination as well for New York's sizable communities of less stylish, more garden-variety British expats and American Anglophiles, as does the grocery next door, officially called Carry On Tea & Sympathy, after the series of smirky sex comedies, *Carry On Nurse*, *Carry On Doctor*, etc., which have been amusing British filmgoers since the 1950s. A fish-and-chips shop down the block, A Salt & Battery, rounds out the empire.

Nicky was full of her usual good cheer at the shop one afternoon, checking in on a cop regular and bantering with a woman from Manchester named Sam about the pleasures of the yeasty spread Marmite—“Absolute heaven! But never refrigerate it!” Her mood darkened, however, when she paused to address Topic A at the store these days: chocolate. Specifically, Cadbury chocolate, the kind made in Britain “By Appointment to H.M. the Queen,” as the Cadbury Company has boasted on its labels with a Royal Warrant since the mid-19th century, when H.M. the Queen was Victoria. Cadbury is the U.K.'s biggest confectioner, beloved not only for its flagship Dairy Milk milk-chocolate bar but also for such whimsically named confections as Flakes, Curly Wurlys, Wispas, Crunchies, Fredos, Creme Eggs, and Mini Creme Eggs—the company's array of brands forms a nearly Wonka-esque tribute to the art and imagination of commercial chocolate manufacture. (The Crunchie bar also bears one of my favorite advertising slogans ever: “Get that Friday Feeling.”)

Tea & Sympathy does

a brisk business in imported Cadbury chocolate. So does another, similarly beloved British specialty store about three blocks and 400 yards due west in the Village, Myers of Keswick. So do similar shops all across the country serving pockets of British expats. But there is another kind of Cadbury chocolate, made in the U.S. under license by the Hershey Company of Pennsylvania—the people who bring you Kisses and Reese's Peanut Butter Cups—and it is this chocolate, and the company that makes it, that has angered Perry and many other Brits. On January 16, she posted the following words on Tea & Sympathy's Facebook page:

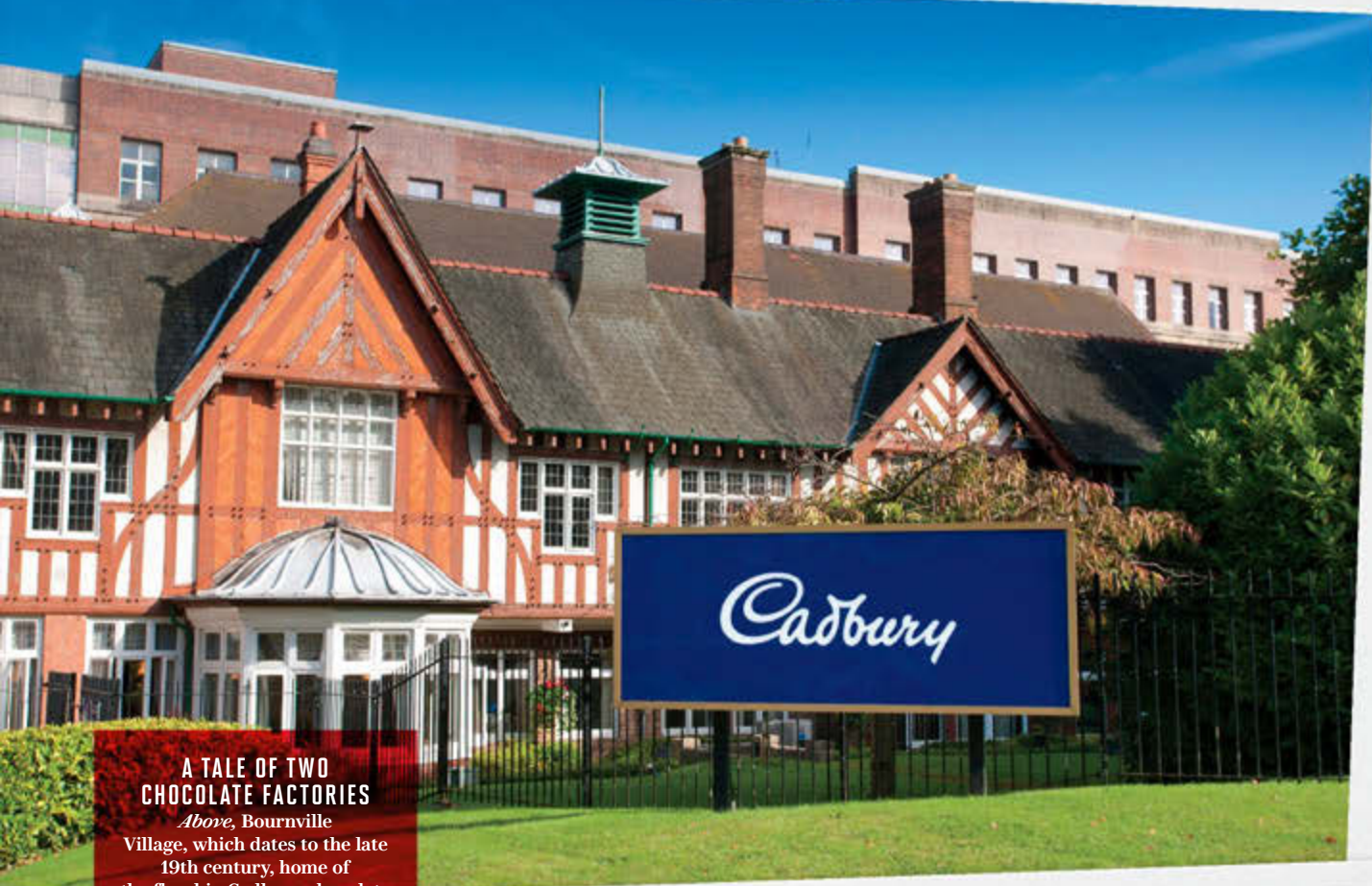
Due to legal action by the so called chocolate maker Hersheys, we can no longer import the real Cadbury chocolate from England. They want us to sell their dreadful Cadbury approximation but we can't in good conscience sell you such awful chocolate when we have made our reputation on selling you the yummy real English stuff.

The outcry that followed—called the “chocapocalypse” in some quarters—resonated far beyond Greenwich Village, warranting international newspaper coverage, stories on NPR and the BBC, and indignant screeds and hashtag activism on social media. A petition against Hershey on moveon.org generated tens of thousands of signatures within days (more than 37,000 as of the second week of March), along with volley after volley of vitriolic comments accusing Hershey of “pathetic” motives, “bullyboy” tactics, and “simply acting like a bunch of little tossers.”

Perry has taken to the cause with the same righteous fervor with which she has been defending the honor of English cuisine for decades, and with which she has more recently been agitating against New York City regulations she considers unfair to small businesses. In my presence, she rallied the lunchtime troops (semi-successfully) in a chant of “Save our chocolate! Save our chocolate!” She also told me she had con-



CADBURY'S ARRAY FORMS A WONKA-ESQUE TRIBUTE TO THE ART OF CHOCOLATE MANUFACTURE.

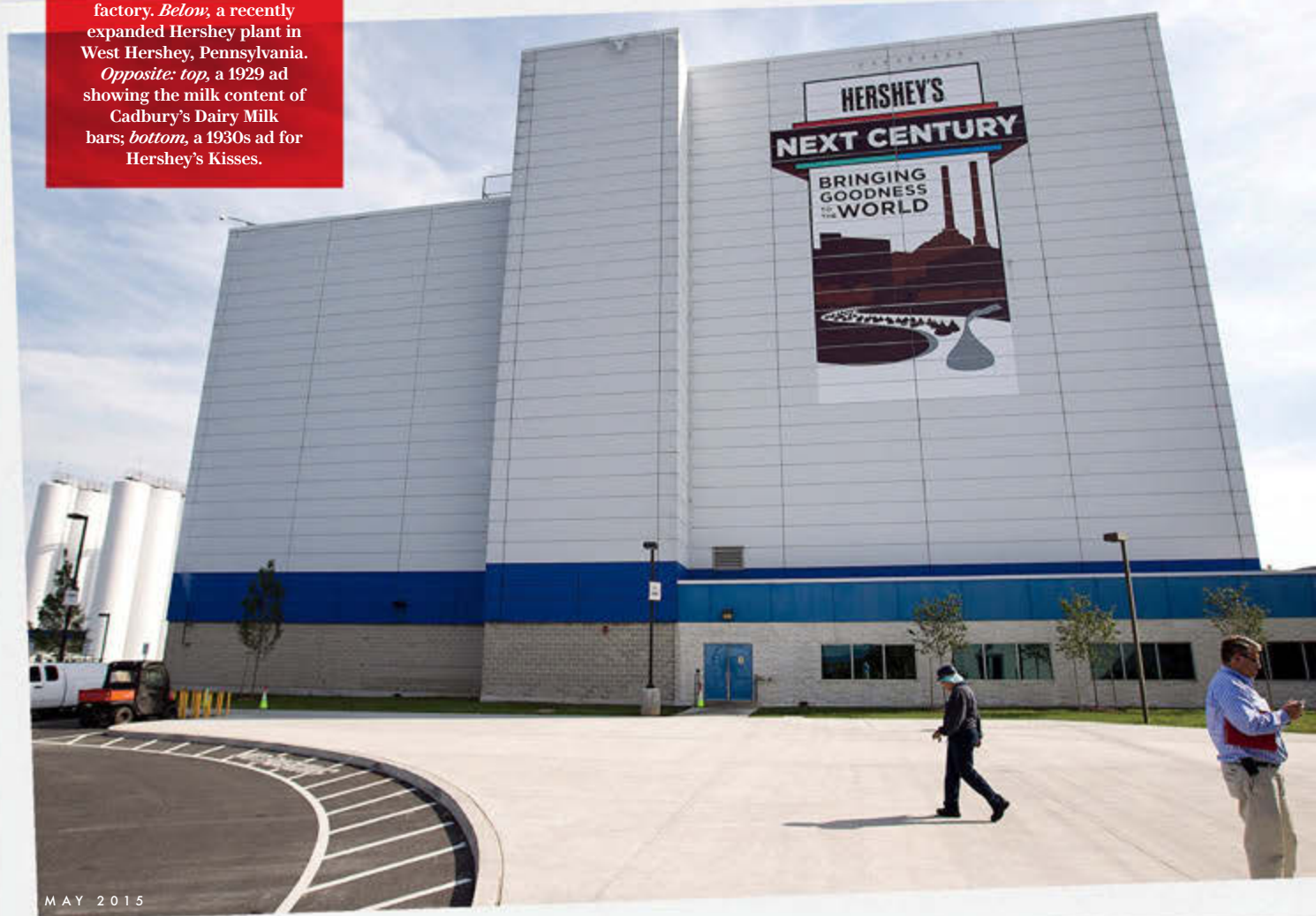


A TALE OF TWO CHOCOLATE FACTORIES

Above, Bournville

Village, which dates to the late 19th century, home of the flagship Cadbury chocolate factory. *Below*, a recently expanded Hershey plant in West Hershey, Pennsylvania.

Opposite: top, a 1929 ad showing the milk content of Cadbury's Dairy Milk bars; *bottom*, a 1930s ad for Hershey's Kisses.



"WHAT HERSHEY'S CALLS CHOCOLATE IS NOT CHOCOLATE TO A BRITISH PERSON," SAYS ZADIE SMITH.

sidered organizing a kind of reverse Boston Tea Party, wherein British-chocolate-lovers would toss Hershey's Kisses into the Hudson River, but she then realized this might run afoul of environmental regulations. Another of her protest ideas: dipping herself in a vat of melted Hershey chocolate and parading through the streets, Lady Godiva-style. She at first seemed to offer this idea in jest, but, given her mounting enthusiasm and her evocative pantomime of how the event might play out, it wasn't hard to imagine that Perry might go through with it—or at least deputize the task to one of her waitresses, who, she noted, "has much better tits than me."

Bar None

Here is the problem: Hershey, after decades of following a seeming "Don't ask, don't tell" policy where the sale of Cadbury-candy imports to the U.S. is concerned, finally decided to take umbrage last summer, filing suit against two of the biggest importers of British food products, Posh Nosh Imports, which is based in New Jersey, and L.B.B. (for Let's Buy British) Imports, which is based in California. The complaint: trademark infringement, on the grounds that the defendants, in Hershey's view, have been conducting an illicit trade in contraband U.K. Cadbury. Hershey won its suit against Posh Nosh last fall, by default, after that company failed to respond. Then, in January, L.B.B. announced it was settling and would no longer import Cadbury products from Britain.

Neither importer really had much of a case, admitted the president of L.B.B., Nathan Duley. "I mean, certainly Hershey has a legally signed agreement to produce Cadbury on Cadbury's behalf here in the States," he conceded. Sounding as if he were explaining thermodynamic law to a high-school physics class for the umpteenth time rather than predicting a likely drubbing in federal court for his own company, he added, "Ultimately, the thing is, Hershey will prevail."

Left unsaid, though, is why Hershey, which had \$7.15 billion in sales in 2013, would go after a British-chocolate import business that Duley estimates generates \$25 million

on the wholesale level, spread among a number of different importers. More to the point, Hershey seems to have underestimated the ill will its suits would stir up thanks to the deep emotional resonance that these sweets have with their customer base.

And so the chocapocalypse. While Cadbury fans can't quite match the National Rifle Association members when it comes to feeling embattled, they do their best. Tea & Sympathy and Myers of Keswick, like many of their ilk across the country, are stockpiling all the Crunchies and Flakes they can find. Both Nicky Perry and the manager at Ye Olde King's Head, a similar shop attached to an English pub in Santa Monica, California, said they had, at best, a six-month supply of Cadbury chocolates on hand.

The potential gravity of the situation was perhaps most poignantly voiced by one elderly, incredulous English gentleman, now living in California, who, speaking to a TV reporter from the BBC, evoked his boyhood during the Blitz: "Even though Hitler bombed the place up to heck, we still got that Cadbury's, and here we are now, we're not going to get it? That doesn't make sense, does it?"

More ruthless than Hitler is not a market niche most brands would be keen to inhabit. But the more people have protested the company's legal actions, "the more Hershey's have dug their heels in," Perry said.

You might call Myers of Keswick the little shop around three corners in relation to Tea & Sympathy. The interior hasn't changed much since Peter Myers, a native of Keswick (pronounced *Kez-ick*), a small working-class town in northern England, opened for business on July 4, 1985: one room, no aisles, black-and-white linoleum flooring, a refrigerator case along the back wall, a deli-like case up front, although the Myers case forgoes traditional Gotham cold-cut offerings in favor of British sausages (four kinds), slabs of English bacon, shepherd's pies, Cornish pasties, mince pies, Scottish eggs ("hard-boiled egg wrapped in Cumberland-sausage meat and rolled in breadcrumbs"), and many more savories—all, like the sausages, made in-house. The store's décor includes several Union Jacks, a royal-wedding banner (Will and Kate's), and, draped over the door to the kitchen, a scarf

for Carlisle United, a perennial fourth-tier English football club (but they made it to the first division once, in 1974!)—all of which are a further reminder, alongside the rows of exotic-to-American-eyes packaged goods similar to the array at Tea & Sympathy, that this isn't the place to pick up a six-pack of Bud Light.

Roger Clark, the store's general manager and self-described "dogbody," told me that he gets at least 30 Cadbury-related inquiries a day from freaked-out customers. The shop has seen its share of panic buying, too. Clark, 38, is founder Peter Myers's nephew and the cousin of the shop's current owner, Jennifer Myers, Peter's daughter. (Peter retired several years ago.) Like his uncle, Roger is a butcher's son from Keswick. He and I spoke while he took bowl after bowl of fresh, pink, intestinal-looking coils of sausage and packaged them for delivery to restaurants around town.

"It's comfort food, isn't it?" he said as he held up a jiggling sausage string and snipped it in half. The juxtaposition was disconcerting, but I knew what he meant. "We're a comfort store, really," he continued. "Nothing we sell here, there isn't somewhat of an American equivalent out there, somewhere. But British people, they're used to the labels; they're used to the packaging; they're used to the brand names. We're selling groceries that are available in every supermarket in England, but in New York all these products are luxury items because they're 3,000 miles away from home. And they're comforting to buy for people who are 3,000 miles away from home."

@vf.com

To meet the OWNERS of Tea & Sympathy, go to VF.COM/MAY2015.

Candy Is Dandy

Though Myers and Tea & Sympathy are friendly, often sharing customers and even stock when one or the other runs dry, the fact that the two operations sit so comparatively cheek by jowl is largely coincidence—it's not as if the rest of Manhattan were as pockmarked with English specialty stores as it is with, say, Starbucks and CVSs and condo towers for absentee billionaires. That one shop has a

STYLED BY ALICIA LOMBARDINI; HAIR, MAKEUP, AND GROOMING BY BIRGITTE; UMBRELLAS BY SWAINE ADENET BRIGGS; FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS



FOR QUEEN AND CADBURY

Above, Myers of Keswick proprietors Roger Clark and Jennifer Myers, in front of their grocery, in Greenwith Village. Below, scrumptious Cadbury product lines atop a case of sausages and meat pies at Myers.



Bryan Stevenson

With the Equal Justice Initiative, founded in 1989, and a recent best-seller, *Just Mercy*, N.Y.U. law professor Bryan Stevenson has challenged America's systemic incarceration of minorities and the poor.

It's leaders like Stevenson, writes DESMOND TUTU, who help shape the arc of the moral universe.

Photograph by ANNIE LEIBOVITZ

Bryan Stevenson is a brilliant lawyer representing America's conscience on a mission to guarantee equal justice for all.

Over the millennia, people have asked, If God is on the side of justice, why do injustice and inequity abound on earth? When will discrimination and prejudice end?

Not frivolous questions.

In the United States of America, the land of the free, 2.3 million people are imprisoned, with one in three black male babies born this century expected to join them—together with 1 in 17 white boys.

The U.S. is the only so-called Western country to still impose the death penalty; more than 3,000 prisoners currently await execution. Recent research indicates approximately 4 percent of them were wrongfully convicted!

You might assume God is not paying attention. But God does not use strong-arm tactics to ensure that justice is done, nor directly intervene to stop injustice. God empowers us to identify the path of righteousness.

When we make mistakes, meander, slip, and sometimes fall, we find the means to gather ourselves, reset our compasses, and continue the journey.

Justice needs champions, and Bryan Stevenson is such a champion. His courage

and commitment contributed to the abolition of the death penalty for juveniles, and he is working tirelessly to end life sentences for adults convicted of crimes committed in their youth.

The Equal Justice Initiative, which Stevenson established to defend those denied fair and just treatment in court, represents death-row prisoners and children in adult prisons, and advocates for sentencing reform and an end to racial bias in the legal system.

Stevenson's book, *Just Mercy*, the story of an innocent black man sentenced to death for killing a white woman in Monroeville, Alabama, the hometown of Harper Lee, is as gripping as it is disturbing—as if America's soul has been put on trial.

We may not be capable of changing the world in one fell swoop on our own, but when we swim together in the same good direction, we become an unstoppable force.

Good leadership is key . . .

Good leaders with the ability to identify the challenges and the tenacity to act on them.

Good leaders driven not by personal ambition but by an innate desire to improve the circumstances of the human family and the human condition.

Good leaders such as our extraordinary Nelson Mandela, who chose reconciliation over vengeance, and epitomized the healing power of magnanimity, grace, and love.

Good leaders such as our youthful Nobel Peace Prize laureate Malala Yousafzai, who refused to accept her own victimization—or that of her sisters—and turned the spotlight on the abusers of women and children.

Good leaders such as Bryan Stevenson, who has made it his business to sound the alarm about inequities in the criminal-justice system that reflect gaping fault lines in the social fabric of the land of Lady Liberty. □

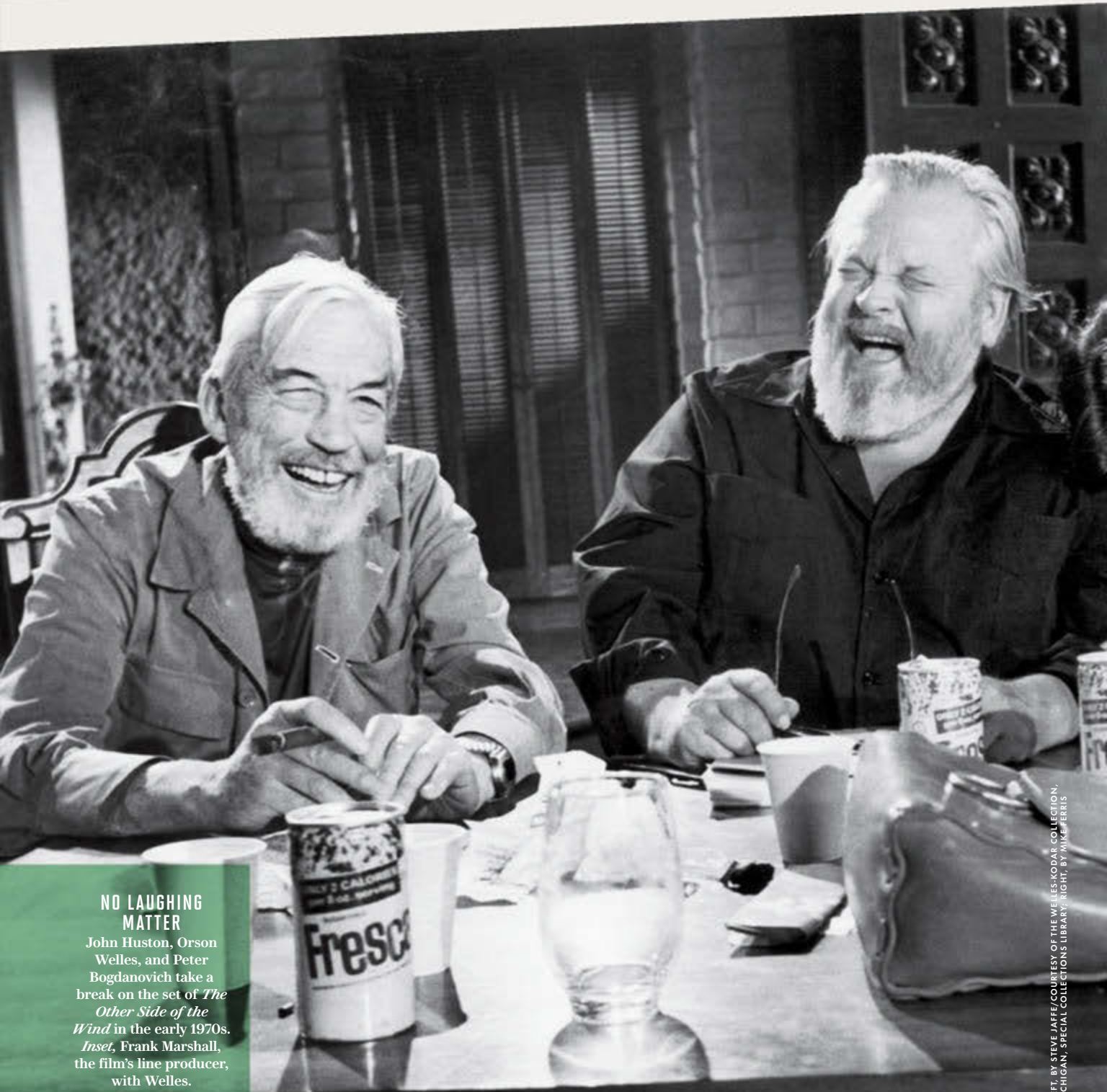


JUSTICE FOR ALL

Bryan Stevenson,
photographed
in Montgomery,
Alabama.



Orson's L



NO LAUGHING MATTER

John Huston, Orson Welles, and Peter Bogdanovich take a break on the set of *The Other Side of the Wind* in the early 1970s. *Inset*, Frank Marshall, the film's line producer, with Welles.

ast Stand

It was to be Orson Welles's comeback, perhaps even topping his masterpiece, *Citizen Kane*. It remains unfinished—though that may change soon. On the centennial of the director's birth, in an adaptation from a new book about the 45-year struggle to make *The Other Side of the Wind*, JOSH KARP reveals why Welles's autobiographical last movie is the stuff of legend



In early 1970, director Orson Welles returned to Hollywood after more than a decade in Europe, and later that year he began work on his innovative comeback movie—*The Other Side of the Wind*.

The movie was the story of a legendary director named Jake Hannaford, who returns to Hollywood from years of semi-exile in Europe with plans to complete work on his own innovative comeback movie—also entitled *The Other Side of the Wind*.

Welles said it wasn't autobiographical.

The story line of *The Other Side of the Wind* was supposed to take place during a single day. At one point, Welles intended to shoot it in eight weeks. Instead, it took six years, and the film remains unfinished nearly four decades later.

Based on a script Welles revised nightly, the film was financed principally by the Shah of Iran's brother-in-law and offered possibly one last shot at topping *Citizen Kane*. The making of *The Other Side of the Wind* began as a tale of art imitating life, but ultimately morphed into life imitating art, on a set where it sometimes became difficult to tell the difference between the movie and real life.

During production many people asked Welles what his movie was all about. To his

Adapted from *Orson Welles's Last Movie: The Making of The Other Side of the Wind*, by Josh Karp, to be published this month by St. Martin's Press; © 2015 by the author.

star, John Huston, he once replied, "It's a film about a bastard director. . . . It's about us, John. It's a film about us."

The answer, however, was different one evening when comedian Rich Little, who was also in the cast, found Welles propped up in bed, making script revisions.

"Orson," Little asked, "what does *The Other Side of the Wind* mean?"

Looking down over his reading glasses, Welles, in his rich baritone, said, "I haven't the foggiest."

1970

The story behind the making of *The Other Side of the Wind* begins at Schwab's drugstore, the Hollywood soda fountain where: Charlie Chaplin played pinball, F. Scott Fitzgerald had his first heart attack, and, according to some versions of the story, Lana Turner was discovered while cutting school to grab a Coke.

On July 3, 1970, a young, unknown cameraman named Gary Graver stopped for coffee at Schwab's and picked up *Variety*, where he read news of Laurence Harvey's fractured knee, Patty Duke's honeymoon, and then this: "Orson Welles, looking very well, visiting friends here and in San Fran, says he soon returns to film his yarn, 'The Other Side of the Wind' . . ."

Though he'd learned camerawork in a naval film unit during the Vietnam War and earned his living on low-budget movies, Graver had said if there was one director he'd always wanted to work for it was Orson Welles.

On a hunch, as Graver later recalled to film critic Joseph McBride, for his book *What Ever Happened to Orson Welles?*, he walked to the pay phone and called the Beverly Hills Hotel.

"Orson Welles, please," he told the hotel operator.

The line began to ring. And then—that voice.

"Hello," rumbled a man who was unmistakably Orson Welles.

"Uh, Orson Welles?," Graver stammered.

"Yes," Welles said. "Who is this?"

"My name's Gary Graver," he said. "I'm an American cameraman and I know you have some projects. I'd sure like to be in-

involved with you as a cinematographer."

Orson brushed him off, explaining that he was headed to the airport.

"Give me your name and your phone number," Welles said.

Graver gave them to him, but knew he'd blown it. Somewhere at the Beverly Hills Hotel, Welles was surely not writing down his number.

After he hung up, a dejected Graver left Schwab's and went home.

As he pulled into his driveway in Laurel Canyon, the phone was ringing. He ran. It was Orson.

"Get on over here to the Beverly Hills Hotel," Welles said. "I've got to talk to you right away!"

Propelled by Orson's undeniable force, Graver sped to the hotel and was soon standing at a bungalow door, face-to-face with Orson Welles, clad in a black silk bathrobe.

Offering Graver coffee and a seat, Welles settled on the edge of a bed, and they chatted for a while before Orson said that he was working on a new movie called *The Other Side of the Wind* and wanted Gary to work with him.

"You are the second cameraman to call me up and say you wanted to work with me," Welles explained. "First there was Gregg Toland, who shot *Citizen Kane* . . ." and now there was Gary Graver, who was absorbing that information when—suddenly—Welles grabbed him by the shoulders and tossed him to the floor. Moments later, Orson crashed beside him and threw a beefy arm over Graver's back to pin him down.

Unable to move, Graver began to wonder if maybe this hadn't been such a great idea. But then—after what seemed like forever—Welles slowly crept to the window and peered over the sill. He stood up and then helped Graver to his feet.

"I saw the actress Ruth Gordon out there," Orson began to explain. "If she'd seen me, she'd have come in here and talked, talked, talked." But Orson didn't want to talk to Ruth Gordon. "Right now," he told Graver, "I want to talk to you."

From that day forward, Orson Welles was the central figure in Gary Graver's life: more important than his wife, his children, his bank account, and his health.

For the rest of Orson's life (and his

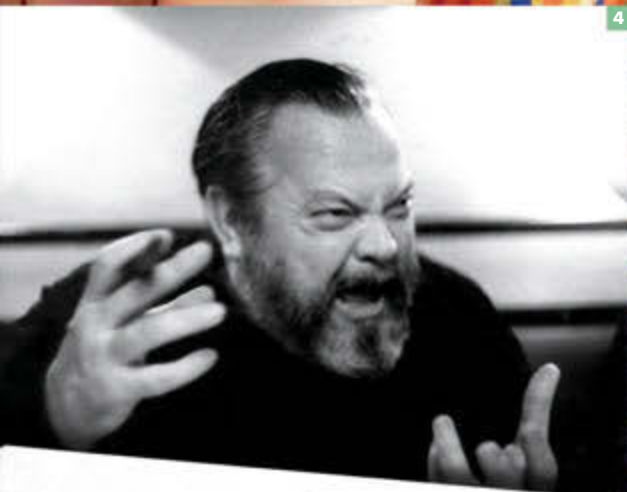
MIKE FERRIS

"WE'RE GOING TO SHOOT IT
WITHOUT A SCRIPT,"
WELLES SAID. "NOBODY'S EVER DONE IT."

THE MASTER

Welles on set. When once asked what *The Other Side of the Wind* meant, Welles replied, "I haven't the foggiest."





JAKE 99A

SURE, HE'S LEAVING EARLY — HE'S THE EARLIEST "LEAVER" OF YOU ALL, AREN'T YOU, MATTHEW?

(MATT) I'm gotta do all the fuck first thing in the morning...

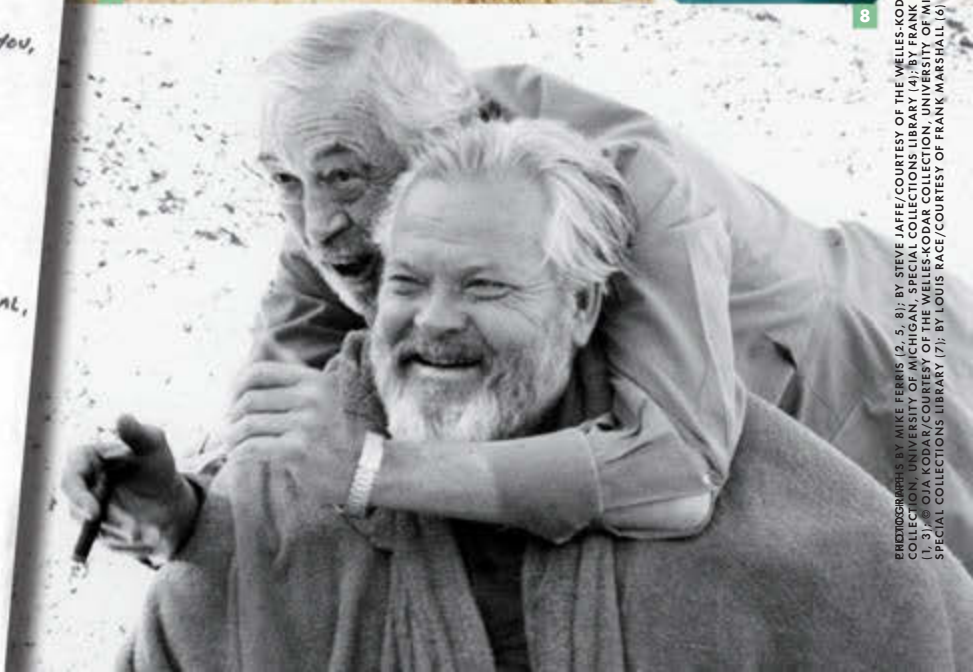
JAKE

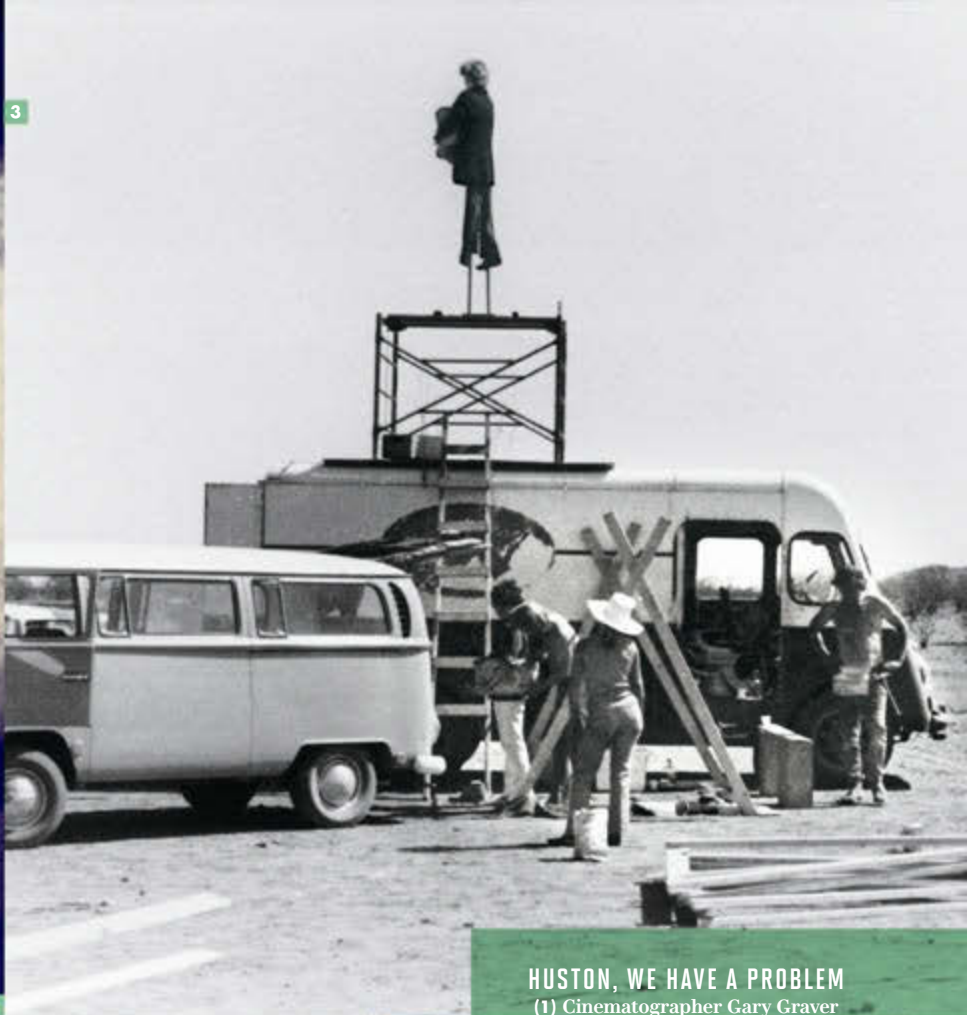
AND THEN STRAIGHT OVER TO UNIVERSAL, TO SEW UP THAT NEW JOB YOU HUSTLED FROM WASSERMAN — OR DIDN'T YOU THINK I KNEW ABOUT THAT?

(MATT) Look, JAKE —

JAKE

BYE, BYE, MATTHEW.





HUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM
 (1) Cinematographer Gary Graver and Oja Kodar, Welles's co-writer and longtime lover, with Welles on set in Carefree, Arizona. (2) Huston. (3) The bread truck that Welles used to create a forced-perspective shot. (4) Welles. (5) The house in Carefree where Welles shot much of the film. (6) Welles shoots on the MGM back lot. (7) A handwritten page of the script of *The Other Side of the Wind*. (8) Huston and Welles.



HIRED IN 1973, JOHN HUSTON HAD MADE THREE MOVIES SINCE WELLES HAD BEGUN SHOOTING.

own), Graver belonged to the great director. And he also belonged to *The Other Side of the Wind*.

The initial inspiration for *The Other Side of the Wind* can be traced back to an event that took place more than 30 years before Graver walked into Schwab's that summer day and found Orson in the pages of *Variety*.

It was May 1937 and Welles entered a Manhattan recording studio to narrate a Spanish Civil War documentary whose script had been written by Ernest Hemingway—who happened to be in the sound booth when Orson arrived.

Only 22, Orson was not yet the Orson Welles, but he was on his way as a talented voice actor earning \$1,000 a week during the Depression and a Broadway wunderkind who'd had the audacity to stage an all-black *Macbeth*.

Looking at Hemingway's script, Welles suggested a few changes, as he recalled to a reporter decades later. Wouldn't it be better, for instance, to eliminate the line "Here are the faces of men who are close to death," and simply let those faces speak for themselves?

Hemingway was outraged that anyone would dare tamper with his words and went after Orson, implying that the actor was "some kind of faggot." Welles responded by hitting Hemingway the best way he knew how. If Papa wanted a faggot, Orson would give him one.

"Mr. Hemingway, how strong you are!" Welles said, camping it up with a swishy lisp. "How big you are!"

Grabbing a chair, Hemingway attacked Orson, who picked up a chair of his own, sparking a cinematic brawl between two of the great creative geniuses of the 20th century, who duked it out while images of war flickered on a screen behind them.

Eventually, however, the pair realized the insanity of their fight and soon slumped to the floor laughing, cracked open a bottle of whiskey, and drank their way into friendship.

Twenty years after this encounter, Welles would work on a screenplay about a hypermanly, middle-aged, American novelist living in Spain who has lost his creative powers and become obsessed with a young bullfighter in whom he sees the promise of youth and per-

haps something more. Meanwhile, a Greek chorus of sycophantic biographers, worshipful grad students, and literary critics trailed the writer, reminding him of his own greatness.

Sometime after Hemingway killed himself, on July 2, 1961, Welles changed the locus of the film to Hollywood and turned the novelist into a sadistic man's-man filmmaker who may also be a closeted homosexual. He decided that all of the action would take place on a single day—July 2—which became his main character's birthday and the last day of his life.

Pitching the movie to a group of admirers in 1966, Welles also explained that he was going to take a unique approach to filming a story for which he'd written several scripts and, as he'd say later, had enough material to fill a "three-volume novel."

"We're going to shoot it without a script," he said, his face lighting up with excitement. "I know the whole story. . . . But what I'm going to do is get the actors in every situation, tell them what has happened up to this moment . . . and I believe they will find what is true and inevitable."

"Have you done that kind of thing before with other films?" one man asked.

"Nobody's ever done it," Welles replied.

Welles also planned to make two films and fuse them into one. First, there was Hannaford's movie, which he conceived as an old man's failed attempt to make an arty, sexy, symbolic picture aimed at the younger audiences of New Hollywood. Beautiful, but without a plot or any sense of purpose, the film was Orson's way of taking a shot at *Blow-Up* director Michelangelo Antonioni, whom he once referred to as "an architect of empty boxes." The footage from this film within the film would be shown to producers and party guests during the other movie Orson was making.

That other film was the story of Hannaford's 70th-birthday party, which is being thrown by a famous golden-era actress (modeled on Orson's friend Marlene Dietrich) as a way of introducing the denizens of New Hollywood to an old master and in hopes that one of them will fund his comeback movie.

In stark contrast to Hannaford's film, Welles was determined to shoot this portion of the picture (the movie's actual story line) in a multi-layered, documentary style comprising footage from still, 16-mm., Super 8, and

other cameras—all of which he would knit together to form a fractured picture of Hannaford on the last day of his life.

Beginning in August 1970 and continuing into December, Welles filmed portions of *The Other Side of the Wind*, despite the fact that he had yet to cast anyone as Hannaford. Standing in for the main character whenever needed, Orson had his small, young crew shoot around Hannaford, sometimes filming one half of a scene that would be finished several years later on a different continent.

The first day of shooting took place on August 23, 1970, at Orson's rented home in Beverly Hills, where critic Joe McBride (whom Welles had met the day before) and critic turned director Peter Bogdanovich (a Welles protégé) played a pair of critics who bicker about film at Hannaford's party. Both characters, Welles explained, were writing books about Hannaford. In real life, McBride and Bogdanovich were each at work on books about Orson.

Wearing a white robe, smoking a big Cuban cigar, and drinking one of the countless Frescos he downed each day, Welles had the pair develop their own film-nerd dialogue, some of it inspired by McBride's theory that John Ford's movies were "an oblique reflection of the changes in American society."

Batting it back and forth, McBride and Welles reshaped the theory and went to a typewriter, where Welles punched out a preposterously cinéastic monologue which contends that "during the thirties Hannaford's predominant motif was the outsider in absurd conflict with society. In the forties he achieved salvation. In the fifties . . ."

The next day, Welles sent Graver off to Utah to scout locations. When he returned, they resumed shooting and didn't stop until Christmas.

"We never had a budget," Graver said. "We just started filming. What I didn't fully understand was . . . that Orson worked seven-day weeks, every single day."

"He just loved the filmmaking process more than anyone I've ever met," said crew member Michael Stringer. "His vision was what everyone else was focus-

**THE CHAIRMAN AND
THE MAVERICK**

Frank Sinatra and Welles
during the American
Film Institute tribute
to Welles, in Los Angeles,
February 9, 1975.



ing on—and that’s an intoxicating process.”

Intoxicating, yes, but it wasn’t for everyone. If you had thin skin or defied Orson, you disappeared quickly or were eaten alive. As a result, there was an extremely high daily turnover rate during the first several months of shooting.

But there were those like Graver, Stringer, and other stalwarts who later called themselves VISTOW (Volunteers in Service to Orson Welles). They weren’t there for money or recognition, both of which were in very short supply. Nor did they care about the unsafe, sometimes illegal working conditions. Instead, only one thing mattered: helping Orson make the movie he wanted to make.

This meant submitting completely to Orson’s demands and never, ever, saying no. And in return you were lifted up, like a side-man playing with Charlie Parker or a spot-shooter flanking Michael Jordan.

Orson would stalk the set, looking through a circle made with his fingers and explaining precisely which lens and focal length he wanted. Without ever peering through a camera, he always seemed to know which image would be captured, and those who did as they were told wound up doing the best camerawork of their lives.

Conceptually, it seemed, Orson used each frame of film as an easel on which he was creating individual works of art that he would then string together in a way that multiplied their impact.

“The concepts Orson had for shots were utterly astounding,” said crew member Eric Sherman. “And each shot had something to do with the larger creation.”

But still, there were times when even Orson was overwhelmed by executing his own vision, once waving off Graver’s idea for capturing an image they’d tried to shoot over and over.

“No, Gary,” Welles said. “God doesn’t want me to make this shot.”

In the fall of 1970, Orson shot Hannaford’s movie in Century City and on the crumbling back lot at MGM, two places where he could film on the cheap and with little interference.

Still in its infancy, Century City was nothing more than a few mirrored buildings and lots of construction dirt when Welles arrived. He transformed it into a neo-

futuristic landscape by putting large mirrors on rolling platforms, then positioning them in ways that turned the reflections of the existing buildings into a strange world that existed nowhere but in his own mind and then on celluloid.

Securing a permit for Gary Graver Productions, Welles skirted additional fees by having Graver erase the date each time it expired and enter a new one. By Christmas, they’d rubbed a hole right through the permit.

Since Hannaford’s film was supposed to be beautifully composed, faux-symbolic nonsense, Welles ran wild in Century City, conceiving visuals and then taking them to extremes. With no sound and Orson directing him on the fly, actor Bob Random (who played the lead in Hannaford’s film-within-the-film) recalled, the experience was like “a silent movie, except you never knew what you were going to do.”

During this period, Welles also fell in love with the idea of creating his own wind and had the crew load a Ritter fan (an airplane propeller on a giant motor) onto a truck and haul it around to various locations, where Random would drive his motorcycle into a blistering dust storm they’d manufactured or spend half a day walking into a blizzard of garbage that crew members were tossing into the fan.

Graver was able to rent the MGM back lot for \$200 a day by having the crew pose as U.C.L.A. film students and making Orson duck whenever they drove past the security gate. Once inside, Welles filmed on half-demolished Western sets where tumbleweeds blew across the street, and shot as much footage as humanly possible, culminating in a final, 72-hour filming spree that took place over a three-day weekend.

Even more free-form than the Century City shoot, filming at MGM heightened Orson’s frustration over glitches, and he seemed to make up for lack of inspiration with rants about “losing the light” which included a notable outburst that took place when someone was sent for dinner for the crew and returned with wrapped plates of food and plastic utensils.

“I wanted sandwiches!” Orson screamed as the light dissipated behind him. “So they could eat with one hand!”

What seemed like madness, however, was

tempered by the knowledge that Welles was carrying the entire film in his head.

“He knew exactly what he needed,” said cameraman Leslie Otis.

Dennis Hopper arrived at Orson’s home one night in November 1970 to play a director much like himself who is being interviewed during a power outage at Hannaford’s party.

“Where’s the lighting?,” Hopper asked Welles when he saw that everything was illuminated by kerosene lamps.

“This is it,” Welles replied.

“That’s cool, man,” Hopper said.

Having recently completed shooting his strange, cocaine-fueled directorial disaster, *The Last Movie*, the clearly stoned Hopper sat down by a fire and rambled, on-camera, about the F.B.I. visiting his house, getting John Wayne fans to see his films, and the idea of the “God-director,” which he describes as a “very dangerous area.”

During the scene, however, Hopper also unintentionally lands on the great unspoken theme of Orson’s movie and his life. Everything, Hopper said, “becomes a movie in front of that camera.”

That evening, Welles also shot an explosive conversation between directors Paul Mazursky and Henry Jaglom, who weren’t getting along at the time. Plying Mazursky with brandy and cigars, Welles filmed the pair for hours while they became more and more agitated with each other as Jaglom (instructed beforehand by Welles) accuses Mazursky (whose first film, *Bob & Carol & Ted & Alice*, had been a surprise hit) of being a sellout, before launching an all-out attack on Hannaford, played by Orson off-camera.

The next morning Mazursky awoke and realized he had no idea how he’d gotten home, but remembered that he’d had a wonderful time shooting scenes for Welles, who called him later that day.

“Now I have a film,” Welles said. “You’re the greatest improviser I’ve ever seen. Unlike Dennis Hopper. He can’t improvise.”

Mazursky told Welles that it had been an honor to work with him and he hoped that they could get together sometime to talk

WELLES SPENT THE REST OF HIS LIFE BATTLING FOR CONTROL OF *THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WIND*.

about filmmaking. Orson said that he'd love to and promised to be in touch once he'd finished *The Other Side of the Wind*.

Paul Mazursky never heard from Welles again.

Between 1971 and 1973, Welles followed a pattern of working on other people's projects—movies, television shows, and lucrative advertising work for a fee reportedly in excess of \$10,000 a day—and then resuming production when he'd earned sufficient money to continue.

Among those projects was a 1972 film version of *Treasure Island*, in which he took the role of Long John Silver for a salary of \$150,000. During that project, Welles met a young European producer who became a partner on *The Other Side of the Wind* and allegedly agreed to put \$150,000 into the film while helping to secure additional funding from German investors.

But the most significant development was Orson's partnership with Les Films de l'Astrophore, a Paris-based production company under the direction of the Shah of Iran's brother-in-law, a deeply cultured man named Dr. Mehdi Boushehri. Launched as part of the Shah's modernization plan and an attempt to form lucrative partnerships with famous directors from the West, Astrophore initially invested \$150,000, giving Orson a nice war chest with which to resume shooting the film in January 1974.

1974

You've been in this picture for three years?" an incredulous John Huston asked Joe McBride when they met at the house Orson was renting in Carefree,

Arizona, in early 1974.

Finally hired at the end of 1973 to play Hannaford, Huston had made three movies since Welles had begun shooting *The Other Side of the Wind* and was about to start working on *The Man Who Would Be King*.

Longtime friends, Welles and Huston were similar men (great artists who were rebellious by nature and horrible with money) who had had divergent careers. Each made his first film in 1941, and both movies became classics (*Citizen Kane* and *The Maltese Falcon*), but since that time, Welles had completed fewer than a dozen features, while Huston had finished nearly 30.

The difference, it seemed, was that Huston could walk away from a film when it was done—rather than when it was perfect. He also cut his films in the camera, learned to work the system, and was willing to trade directing a few decent films for the chance to make a classic.

But, more than anything, Huston succeeded because he had the air of a man

who valued the adventure of filmmaking as much as, if not more than, the final product—something embodied by the unifying theme of his work, once described as "an adventure shared by desperate men that finally came to nothing."

He found just such an adventure in Carefree, where Welles was living and shooting in an architecturally significant home that he'd rented from a wealthy New Jersey family under the pretense that he would be sitting quietly by the pool and writing his memoirs. Shortly thereafter, he turned their vacation house into a film set.

When Huston arrived, Welles introduced him to comedian Rich Little, whom he'd hired to play Hannaford's protégé, Brooks Otterlake, a critic turned hot young director who loves to do celebrity impressions—much like Bogdanovich.

"John, I want you to meet Rich Little," Welles told Huston, according to Peter Tonguette's book *Orson Welles Remembered*. "He's probably the world's greatest impressionist."

"Oh, well then, we're going to get along fine," Huston replied. "I have a lot of paintings and that's one of my hobbies and we'll have many great discussions. I'm thrilled."

"No," Orson screamed. "Not that kind of impressionist!"

On the set, however, Welles handled his old friend with enormous delicacy, knowing that the film would turn not only on Huston's performance but also on his own ability to extract the sense of loneliness that lay beneath the 67-year-old director's courtly swashbuckler persona.

Thus, despite the fact that Welles arrived on the set each day (now in a purple robe) toting a huge script and new pages of dialogue he'd written the night before, Orson told Huston not to memorize his lines. Instead, Welles said, "the idea is all that matters," and he trusted Huston to embody Hannaford when the cameras rolled, something that seemed to work quite well, except on the occasions when his lead actor got lost or forgot the purpose of a scene.

In those situations, Bogdanovich recalled in a 2007 interview, Huston tended to say something—anything—with enormous authority before exiting with great confidence. Meaning that when the line might be "I'm going to talk to Billy about that," Huston would say, "We'll set it up for Tuesday. I'm going to the kitchen," and then walk off, leaving a bewildered scene partner alone in the frame.

When Orson would finally yell "Cut!," Huston would re-enter and innocently ask, "Was that the line?"

"Well, *not exactly*," Welles would say, laughing. "I dunno *what* the hell you just said."

On the day that Huston had to shoot

a drunken, self-loathing monologue into a bathroom mirror, Welles treated him with the kind of care reserved for a young actress filming her first nude scene. Closing the set, he assembled only essential members of the crew to film the sequence.

Having encouraged Huston to drink throughout the day, Welles wanted a sense of both fragility and power, which he squeezed out of Huston by filming the scene 14 times (from the top, middle, and bottom) before they nailed it.

"That's the one, John," Welles said.

"That's the *only one*," Huston responded.

But after his emotionally and physically depleted lead actor left, Welles said, "Print them all," knowing there were great moments in each take that he could edit together to create a scene of even greater depth and impact than the one Huston had executed perfectly.

To the crew filming in Arizona, Orson was like the Wizard of Oz, by turns a gigantic omnipotent force who infused the set with electricity the moment he arrived, and also a mere mortal, prone to outbursts of childish emotion when things didn't go his way.

"One minute you'd feel this whirlwind of power," said crew member Constance Pharr. "And then there were moments when he pouted like a two-year-old."

Though he was frequently self-aware and sometimes gave meta-commentary on his own tirades ("You need to do this . . . We need to change the lighting . . . And for God's sake we need to get Orson to shut up . . ."), Welles felt entitled to his dark humors, particularly in moments of creative impotence while the crew sat for hours waiting for him to find inspiration.

Actress Susan Strasberg, who played a film critic based on Pauline Kael, recalled an incident when a crew member asked him where to place a camera. "Idiot," Welles belted, "can't you see I haven't the foggiest notion of what I want? I wouldn't be sitting here if I did."

Because he was so demanding, Welles also created a sense of frenzied chaos on the set that had everyone so busy scurrying around to please him that a production assistant ran through a sliding glass door while trying to fulfill one of Orson's requests.

Despite the craziness, however, the atmosphere was exhilarating, and there were certain crew members who wouldn't desert Orson even after being fired, something that happened on a regular basis to line producer Frank Marshall.

Each time Orson told him to leave, Marshall would simply go to his room at the nearby Desert Forest Motel, *CONTINUED ON PAGE 168*

TRIO BRAVO

In 2009, when singer-songwriter Rufus Wainwright premiered *Prima Donna*, an appropriately melodramatic modern opera about an aging soprano (think Maria Callas) on the eve of a comeback gig in Paris on Bastille Day, he knew his biggest challenge would be to keep the work in the public consciousness. "It's opera," he deadpans. "Those either last for 200 years or you never hear of them again." So he turned to contemporary artists Francesco Vezzoli and Cindy Sherman to create a video installation of the grand finale, which debuts in July at the Odeon of Herodes Atticus, in the Acropolis, Athens. Vezzoli, best known for video works that satirize celebrity, was keen to direct Sherman, who has spent four decades creating provoca-

tive conceptual selfies in a whirlwind of solitary introspection. "Of all postwar artists, she has explored human identity in all its facets in the deepest ways. I don't have expectations. I have the excitement of the novelty," Vezzoli says. And for her part, Sherman is excited to embody the role of a character that, for once, she didn't conjure. "What made me want to do it is the fear that the character is going through. She's old now. Can she live up to her audience's expectations? I think it'll free me up to just let it all hang out." Such talk of divas makes one wonder if there could be too many cooks in this creative kitchen. But Wainwright says he's happy in the audience now: "I have already very much taken the position of the dead composer!"

—DEREK BLASBERG

Rufus Wainwright,
Cindy Sherman, and
Francesco Vezzoli,
photographed
at Lillie's Victorian
Establishment in
Times Square.



GROOMING BY LOSI (VEZZOLI, WAINWRIGHT); PROPS STYLED
BY ANDREA HUELBE; FOR DETAILS, GO TO VF.COM/CREDITS



Matt McMullen has almost single-handedly changed the world of sex toys, using cutting-edge technology to design his startlingly lifelike RealDolls. Forget the sad-sack pervert with a cheap inflatable: McMullen's customers shell out \$5,000 and up. At Abyss Creations **GEORGE GURLEY** and photographer **JONATHAN BECKER** get an eye-opening look at the options for building some body to love

DAWN *of the*

A man with short brown hair, wearing a dark blue button-down shirt, sits at a desk in a dimly lit office. He is looking off-camera to the left with a serious expression. On the desk in front of him is a computer monitor displaying a webpage, a keyboard, and a mouse. A framed photograph of a couple is on the desk. Behind him, a large wooden cabinet holds several sex dolls. One doll with long red hair is on the left, and another with long dark hair is lying across the top of the cabinet. A third doll is partially visible on the right. The office has a window with blinds in the background.

WELCOME TO
THE DOLLHOUSE
RealDoll creator
Matt McMullen
in his office
at Abyss Creations'
factory, outside
San Diego.

SEXBOTS

It's a beautiful morning in Huntington, West Virginia, but David Mills wants to drink beer in the same ramshackle house where he has lived since birth. In the other bedroom is his ailing, nonagenarian father. Mills the younger is best known for writing *Atheist Universe: The Thinking Person's Answer to Christian Fundamentalism*. In the foreword, Carl Sagan's son Dorion praised Mills's "impeccable logic, intellectual bravery, and professional clarity." Richard Dawkins gave the book a blurb—"an admirable work"—and mentioned it two times in his best-seller *The God Delusion*.

In his introduction to a new edition, in 2006, Mills gleefully informed readers that he has been publicly condemned as a spokesman for Satan, a disgrace to human dignity, a moron, a shrimphead, and, his favorite, a "pitiful middle-aged man, embarrassed by his lifelong unemployment, and frozen, emotionally and intellectually, in early adolescence."

At 55, he is tired of atheism activism, which he's been doing since the late 1970s, and ready for a career reboot. Recently he became the owner of a RealDoll—the Rolls-Royce of sex dolls, created two decades ago by artist and entrepreneur Matt McMullen. Mills, who learned about them from an episode of the sitcom *Family Guy*, visited the company's Web site and was convinced the photos were of models, not dolls, because they all looked so realistic. More research proved otherwise.

"I thought, Well, gee, I would enjoy something like that!" he recalls. "I mean, I love women. God, I absolutely love women." And especially their legs. "That's what attracts me to a woman as much as a face, if not more." Big problem, though: "My fundamental personality conflict is that I really like women but I don't like to be around people."

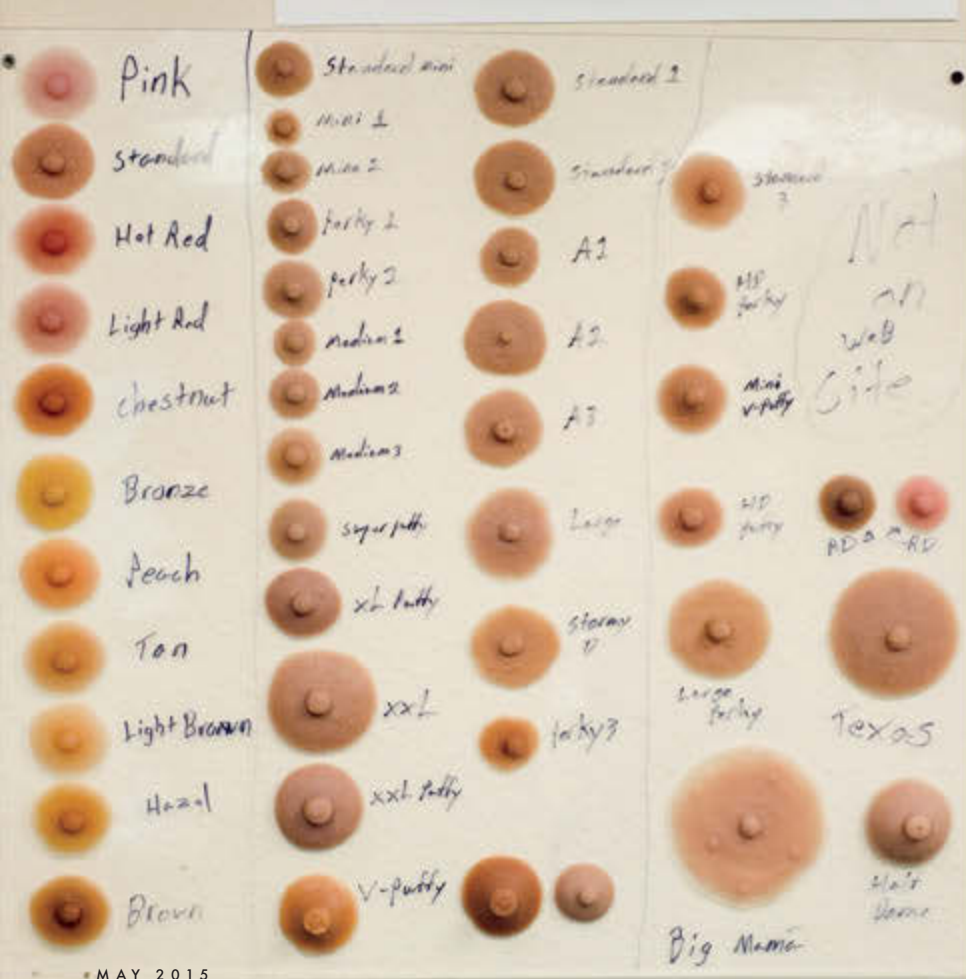
A loner since childhood, he met his first wife in 1984 in Communist Poland through a



LOVE IS IN THE AIR

Clockwise from above: preparing to pour high-quality silicone into molds at Abyss; poured dolls; the assortment of nipple choices; a RealDoll2, Body Type A, with wig and makeup done.





mail-order-bride catalogue and was with her for 18 years, until he met his future second wife online. That marriage ended right before she was arrested by the F.B.I. for a white-collar crime. Mills has avoided relationships ever since. He estimates that of the approximately 180 women he has had sex with, a little over half were prostitutes. That profession has gone way downhill in Huntington over the years, so Mills thought a RealDoll might do the trick. He ordered a “Body A” RealDoll2 model (83 pounds, 33-24-35 measurements, custom freckles) and named her Taffy the same day he mailed a check for \$7,149 to a factory in San Marcos, California, called Abyss Creations.

Three and a half months later, a coffin-like crate arrived. Thrilled, he pried it open, tore away the plastic, and screamed. The extremely human-like doll was looking right at Mills, and it reminded him of the *Twilight Zone* episode where William Shatner comes face-to-face with a monster on an airplane wing.

Then he became aroused.

Rise of the Sexbots

In 2006, Dr. Henrik Christensen, the chairman of the European Robotics Network at the Royal Institute of Technology, at the University of Stockholm, predicted that “in the next five years” humans would be having sex with robots. Even if they were pretty basic ones, it wouldn’t matter, he told *The Economist*, because “people are willing to have sex with inflatable dolls, so initially anything that moves will be an improvement.”

In *Love & Sex with Robots: The Evolution of Human-Robot Relationships*, artificial-intelligence expert and international chess champion David Levy professed that by 2050 robots “will have the capacity to fall in love with humans and to make themselves romantically attractive and sexually desirable to humans.” One expert surveyed in a Pew Research Center report out last year predicts that robot sex partners will be “commonplace” by 2025 and foresees robot sex being both popular and “the source of scorn and division, the way that critics today bemoan selfies as an indicator of all that’s wrong with the world.”

In the new sci-fi thriller *Ex Machina*, a young employee of a Google-like company (Domhnall Gleeson, who played a sweet-natured synthetic manbot in an episode of the highly acclaimed British TV series *Black Mirror*) visits a secret research facility in the mountains, where a reclusive tech mogul (Oscar Isaac) shows off his latest creation, a very attractive, emotionally intelligent android named Ava (Alicia Vikander). Believe it or not, something goes wrong.

As for robot sex partners, which Abyss is in the early stages of developing, Mills has been skeptical. He likes the way the dolls are

“WELL, THE IDEA, THE GOAL, THE FANTASY THERE, IS TO BRING HER TO LIFE ULTIMATELY,” SAYS REALDOLL CREATOR MATT McMULLEN.

now and can't envision a walking, talking sexbot indistinguishable from humans happening for 500 years. "It's just too horribly complicated," he reasons. "I just think the more moving parts you have with anything, a car or an airplane, the more problems you have, and if you can't send it back to the factory... shit, I couldn't even get a plumber for goddamn two weeks. Am I going to call the local RealDoll repairman?"

Then, suddenly, he warms to the idea of having one. "Well, I *hope*. I mean, yes, that would be one more option."

"Modern technology has now progressed to the point where factory-built partners are at least as good as human partners," Mills says later at a downtown bar. "Not everybody wants to be in a relationship, especially an emotionally draining, costly, anxiety-filled one. If a man says, 'I don't want to be in a relationship,' most of the time that's probably a fucking good decision! And he can order a RealDoll, which will end up being a helluva lot cheaper than the women he was dating! If a man has a hundred or no girlfriends, RealDolls are a good option no matter what."

A hovering waitress says, "Last call." Mills orders a beer and returns to a pet peeve. "Women have enjoyed sex toys for 50 years, probably 5,000 years, if the truth be known, but men are still stigmatized! We have to correct that! I want to be the Rosa Parks of sex dolls! Men are not going to sit in the back of the bus anymore!"

Entering Abyss

There is no sign outside Abyss Creations, located at the end of a lonely highway service road north of San Diego. On a typically flawless Southern California day, Annette Blair jumps up from her desk and opens the front door. The perky, curvaceous sales manager, who also handles publicity, then locks it to

keep out "lookie-loos," especially teenagers, who like peeking inside.

Walking in, one of the first things you see is a nude figure with a metal skeleton face and coiled, conduit metal Medusa dreadlocks, created for an adult film and shown at the annual Adult Video News Expo, in Las Vegas. It was quite the conversation piece at the RealDoll booth and Annette's favorite. When plugged in, the futuristic fantasy doll lights up like a pinball machine, and her innards spin around. Exposed circuitry is a turn-on for robot-sex fetishists, she confirms, but this is just an artwork. Aside from her breasts she isn't fully functioning—unlike the two scantily clad, statuesque, and otherworldly blondes who seem to be gazing over or through us.

Closer up, these replicas of two Wicked Pictures porn stars look ready to break through their plastic cages to embrace or tackle you. But like all the other dolls here, these Wicked Girls have neck bolts for hanging purposes and so they can't move during transport. Behind them on the wall are stunning framed portraits of what must be A-list models or actresses. Annette shakes her head. I refuse to believe it. She insists they are the work of Stacy Leigh, a pioneering photographer of sex dolls, owner of nine, and authority on the subculture.

Another extraordinary sight in the showroom is a male doll playing air guitar on a red upholstered throne. "You might recognize the face because he just walked in a few moments ago," she says. "That's Matt." Her boss has to talk to someone working on a history of the sex doll, which often begins with Pygmalion, picks up steam with Dutch sailors' dolls in the 18th century, continues to famous doll owners—artist Oskar Kokoschka among them—and then focuses on Matt McMullen.

It wasn't Matt McMullen's intention to invent "The World's Finest Love Doll." It

was a fluke. Before he came on the scene, not much progress had been made beyond unrealistic, hideous-looking blow-ups, which were more novelty item than gratifying sex toy. In the 1980s, Japan began producing high-end dolls, but because they were made of plastic, they didn't feel real or have the illusion of being real from 10 feet away. Their parts were separate—the upper and lower leg had a visible seam between them—and they were popped together like a G.I. Joe. You always knew it was a doll.

By 1994, when he wasn't working odd jobs or playing in grunge bands, McMullen, who had studied art in college, was sculpting a female figure at home. Just something he was driven to do. "I started this whole thing in my garage as a hobby, a project, and it kind of took on a life of its own," he says during our first conversation. "It started as a concept I had for a posable sculpture—a highly realistic mannequin, I guess, is the best way to describe it." In the past he has said it was more of a "joke" or "funky art piece" than anything and became a sex device only because of "the public's demand."

Nevertheless, it was McMullen who, with his own hands, created the first silicone sex doll with a completely accurate, fully articulated skeleton that was posable. And when he began selling them for \$3,500, in 1997, there was nothing at that level anywhere in the world. That same year he was invited on *The Howard Stern Show*, and "the King of All Media" asked "Leonardo Da Vagina" to make him a doll. When it finally arrived, Stern was ecstatic. "Best sex I ever had!" he said. "I swear to God! This RealDoll feels better than a real woman!"

In 1999, HBO's *Real Sex* ran a segment on RealDolls that has since aired countless times. In 2014 the adult-entertainment Web site Lustocracy called the episode "a cultural moment in time that marks the dawn of the next tech-enabled sexual revolution in America. Viewers were both repulsed and attracted." According to Abyss, McMullen's dolls have popped up on more than 20 other television shows—among them *CSI: New York*, *My Name Is Earl*, TLC's *My Strange Addiction*, *Sons of Anarchy*, *House*, and *2 Broke Girls*—and co-starred in 10 films, including *Totally Busted 3*, *Rubberheart*, *Regarding Jenny*, *Surrogates*, starring Bruce Willis as an F.B.I. agent hunting down the killer of androids, and *2040* (when sex is outlawed, androids replace porn stars).

But it was 2007's *Lars and the Real Girl* that put RealDolls on the cultural map, when one of McMullen's dolls landed a role opposite Ryan Gosling, who played the quirky, socially stunted lead. Lars becomes

less reclusive soon after Bianca shows up in a crate. He begins wheelchairing her around to family dinners, a party, and church, much to the delight of the tolerant townsfolk, then later drowns the now “terminally ill” Bianca in a lake.

The Cure for Loneliness

The majority of RealDoll customers are a decade or three older than Ryan Gosling and probably not as smooth with the ladies. Some are grieving over the loss of a spouse and can't fathom dating. Others are perhaps disfigured, disabled, or so terrified of women they can't even look at them. But they all like the idea of having a human-ish presence around rather than watching them on a screen, drowning their sorrows, and withering away completely alone.

But not all customers are painfully shy sad sacks. There is no “type” who buys its dolls and other silicone products. They include futurists, art collectors, truckdrivers, scientists, housewives, couples seeking to enhance their sex lives, lawyers, surgeons, a nursing association, a dental school, men with prostate cancer who can't get an erection but miss the cuddling, burn victims, and wounded vets.

According to Abyss, the Department of Defense has purchased dolls from the company—minus the dirty bits—so soldiers can practice saving the wounded in war games. Psychiatrists have used them in therapy sessions. Parents have ordered them for their autistic or otherwise challenged grown-up children. Add to the list very wealthy sheikhs, princes, a NASCAR driver, a Nobel Prize winner, and Mötley Crüe singer Vince Neil, who showed off his \$15,000 customized Body A on MTV's *Cribs*.

The company is “fiercely” protective of the privacy of all its customers, not just celebrities, who usually demand a non-disclosure agreement or have a doll purchased through an intermediary. Deep sources there confirm that an actor with “anger-management issues” bought five at once and was seen sunbathing with them on his yacht.

Most owners aren't that ostentatious. Like proper Victorians, they take care of business in private and then hang their dolls back up in the closet. Some married men use a fake name when they order, have it shipped somewhere other than their home, and say, “Don't call; don't leave a message; don't e-mail!” But what has long been considered a fetish for major pervs has become more accepted as the perception of “sex doll” has changed, largely thanks to McMullen, who prefers “love doll” and “work of art.”

Annette Blair, who also serves as the tour guide at Abyss, unlocks the “engineering and parts room.” The walls are covered with schematics of what RealDolls look like inside. “No one's really allowed in here,” she says, quickly moving on to another room filled with body parts, all made of a unique blend of high-quality silicone.

Annette points to the stairs leading down to the production floor, where the dolls are put together and brought to life. That is the destination for a dozen hanging from an overhead conveyor and dangling a few feet off the floor. It's like we just missed a mass slaughter at a dry cleaner or meatpacking plant. But these aren't even RealDolls yet, she clarifies—they're *poured* dolls waiting to be bathed by Schuyler Dawson, who is scrubbing away on a Classic RealDoll Body 4 (four feet ten, 77 pounds) before doing some finishing touches, perhaps some French-manicured fingernails, freckles, or fluffy, glued-on mohair pubic hair.

Between the Classic and the RealDoll2 models, customers must decide which of 11 different body types and 31 faces they want. They choose from more than 30 styles and shades of nipples; skin and lip type; hair and eye color; pubic hair (trimmed, natural, full, shaved); eyebrows (fake, human hair); removable tongues, tattoos, piercings; oral inserts (e.g., the seven-inch “Deep Throat”).

Untold thousands of configurations are possible, and prices go up the more custom options that come into play. A man with a body-hair fetish once requested to have individual hairs meticulously hand-punched on a female doll to make it almost ape-like but balked at the \$10,000 price. McMullen declined an offer of \$50,000 to make a sex dog for a “very *Deliverance*”—sounding hillbilly, though he suspected it was a radio-show prank. He refuses to make animals or children.

Another area where McMullen's personal morals intervene is celebrities. He will make a doll that roughly resembles one but not a complete copy, unless he gets permission. Annette remembers a woman who ordered a Sweeney Todd doll with a ghostly white wig that looked as much like Johnny Depp as possible. Female customers are in the minority (less than 10 percent). Some buy female dolls. Dangling in front of us now is a standard male, a Ken-like doll for which a woman paid extra to jump the line and to get custom features: cat's eyes, fangs, natural toenails, and flaccid and hard penis attachments.

Many unusual products here were created in direct response to requests by customers. Gay men were presumably responsible for the existence of the compact

“Bottoms-Up” toy (shapely cheeks, dangling testicles), available in five skin tones. Hermaphrodite-doll enthusiasts can be picky. Some want the vagina and the penis. Some want the penis, the vagina, but no testicles. Others want removable genitals so they can go back and forth between genders. When they've had enough of the penis they can remove the attachment and put the regular vagina back in until they get tired of that.

Uncanny Valley of the Dolls

A loud hydraulic hoist is lifting bodies out of molds. It takes three months to make a doll, but if someone orders an express, for an extra \$1,500, it can be done in a month. Abyss sells an average of 6 to 10 a week. Believing in quality over quantity, the company doesn't like to push it too much. Yet 10 are shipping out this week. There are 45 purchased dolls on the waiting list. Four more orders came in this morning.

They range in height from four ten to five ten and can weigh anywhere from 60 to 125 pounds. Annette presents the newest model, a Body D, which has proved to be quite popular with its 36DD's, plump rump (with gel implants to make it more jiggly), 24-inch waist, and thicker legs. “This is our most voluptuous girl—feel her.” I feel creepy doing so without permission. “So those are her breasts. Go ahead and give them a feel!” Quickly I run a finger down her arm and recoil in disgust.

According to the “uncanny valley” theory in human aesthetics, such a response can occur when humans first come into contact with lifelike dolls, robots, or near-perfect digital imagery. More time spent around them, though, can lead to positive, empathetic feelings. It's true. When I return to Abyss the next month, a beautiful, mysterious Body D will have a hypnotic effect on me. Circling and admiring “Brooklyn” from different angles, I will work up the nerve to stroke her back, pat her butt, and feel no shame.

Standing by a wide variety of body parts scattered on and around a table, a beaming, prosperous-looking 50-ish man is picking up his \$9,000 doll, a volleyball-playing California supermodel type. Annette met with him and his wife for hours, helping them to create it. They were very particular about hair, eyes, and skin tone. The delighted husband is telling Blake Bailey, the production manager, how beautiful it is, and doesn't wish to speak to a reporter. According to Stacy Leigh, owners are “very leery of the press, almost to a fault, where the guys you want to speak to you

won't speak to you. They're afraid of losing their jobs, so you're left with the fringe, who are almost crazy."

X-Rated Tickle Me Elmo

Matt McMullen exits his office and walks by the doll made in his likeness when he was fronting the hard-rock band Nick Black and looked more like Kurt Cobain. Covered with tattoos and wearing a floral-pattern shirt, jeans, a couple of earrings, he could pass for a rock star on the cusp of 40. (He's 45.) His music career is on hold. "I am in a mode right now where I'm very into the doll thing again," he says, leaning back on a leather couch. "The stark reality is you kind of have got to pay your bills, and one of my two creative outlets tends to be more profitable for me."

He is facing the Wicked Pictures contract stars he transformed into Wicked RealDolls. Starting at \$6,749, Wicked RealDolls cost a bit more than some models but come with extras like a signed certificate, a bottle of perfume chosen by the actress, and sometimes even a phone call. Jessica Drake, who co-starred with RealDolls in the futuristic porn *2040*, has been known to call Abyss customers who have bought her likeness, and has even sent outfits for the dolls. Most recently, Matt worked with Asa Akira, who came in to get her hands, feet, nipples, genitals, and everything else molded.

"Sure, it's fun—there's worse things you can do with your day," he says. For the Wicked Girls it's a "difficult" process, according to Annette, but they feel honored when their likenesses are unveiled at the A.V.N. Expo. "We've gotten to know them pretty well, the company and the girls," Matt says. "Great people." His phone rings; one of his kids. On the table between us is a book of photographs by Helmut Newton that includes several RealDolls. Under it is *Diamonds & Pearls: Dolce & Gabbana*—the designers met with Matt before deciding to use his dolls instead of mannequins for this 10-pound doorstop.

He's here every day but can't oversee ev-

everything and often feels spread thin. It takes time and effort to put himself in the right creative mode to, say, sculpt a new face. Then he'll get sidetracked by a multitude of things. Phone calls. Clients. His second wife. His ex-wife, who owns 49 percent of the business (she's not involved in operations). Someone wants his approval of a makeup job. A doll isn't fitting into a crate. Meanwhile, he's trying to sculpt a new face.

Given his druthers, Matt would spend all his work time creating new things. Down the hall is Abyss's sister company, which makes Boy Toy dolls, the line of smaller sex dolls he created in 2008. Phoenix Studios is getting more and more into prosthetics for mastectomy patients and fetishwear for drag performers and transgender individuals. "We just made this product line—it's basically a boob shirt that you can wear, and it's made of silicone, and it looks completely real," he says. "It's like a wearable doll's skin, and this is something that people have asked for for years."

He wants to show off the wearable breasts and "gurl shorts," with built-in genitalia, that can convincingly change one's gender. "This is a separate venture from the doll thing—it's kind of a new avenue," he says in the studio. "Here I am, making a living with boobs! That's what I do. They come in all sizes and shapes. See, we've come up with all these different nipples to meet what people ask for, because no matter what you have, there's always somebody who is like, 'No, I want my nipples on there to be puffy and red.' And you're like, 'Red?' 'Yes, red like a fire truck.' So there you have it, red nipples." A chart on the wall lists the many nipple colors and designs from light red to hot red to pink, chestnut, bronze, peach, tan, brown, black, Standard Mini, Mini 1 and 2, Perky, Super Puffy, XL Puffy, XXL Puffy, V Puffy, "Texas," and "Big Mama" (about the diameter of a coffee cup).

Less excited by robotics and artificial intelligence, Matt feels pressure to move in that direction. People keep asking when the dolls will talk back. "I'm torn, because that sounds really cool, but at the same time I like the old-school-ness of what it is now," he explains. There is also something pure

**LADIES-
IN-WAITING**
RealDolls are
made to the client's
specifications,
from hair color to
eye color, breast
size, and beyond.

CUSTOMERS MUST DECIDE
WHICH OF 11 DIFFERENT
BODY TYPES
AND 31 FACES THEY WANT.

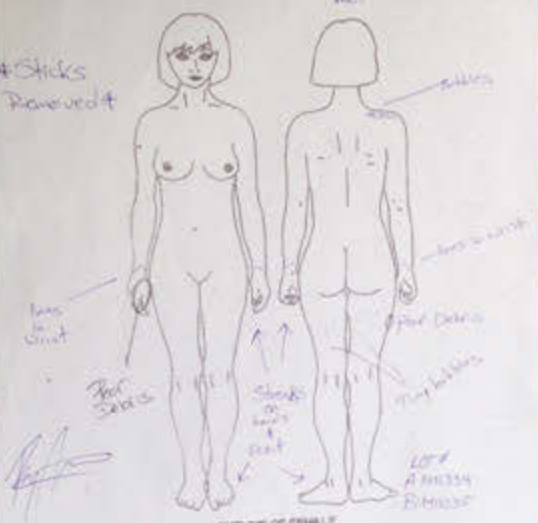


PS 2/19/15

ECO 361
50% Del
7% Shaker
4% Skip

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dots

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Removed



OUTLINE OF FEMALE

about the way his customers interact with them now, and that, too, could be lost when sexbots become available.

"I think that will take away from the reality of what real relationships are with the doll where it's mostly imagination," he continues. "You program a doll to agree with everything you say, do everything you say, always be nice to you and go along with what you want, it's *boring*. I'll tell you in a heartbeat, dolls could never replace a real woman. I mean, half the challenge and half the battle of a relationship is that constant tension between men and women that we all know is there."

Despite his misgivings, Matt has decided to add some extra sci-fi apps. It's a little too soon to talk about it, but . . . "One of the bigger things I've been plying away at is integrating some sort of minor intelligence into the dolls where you can communicate with them," he says, like an unusually mellow mad scientist. "Some minor expression, verbal interaction, moving eyes, stuff like that. I could have released stuff [in 2013], but it's not quite where I want it yet, and until I get that technology to a point that I feel it *enhances* the doll instead of making it a little spooky or just awkward, I'm not going to do it."

Yet he's in the process of forming a separate company dedicated to doll robotics. "I want the doll to retain its beauty and the design and movement, the whole thing," he reiterates. "We've all seen clumsy animatronics, even at Disneyland: the Indiana Jones character at the end of the ride, his eyes are a little wonky and something looks wrong with the way his face moves—I don't want the doll to do that. I don't want it to *be* like that. I want it to be surreal and pleasant, and maybe less is more. So the face doesn't have to do all these movements if it's interacting with you. Just enough to convey that feeling."

I ask him about an enhancement that didn't take off, the Hip Actuator, a device that could be put inside a doll and activated by a control box with different sequences. "The doll would basically start writhing around and moving her hips," Matt recalls. "It was kind of neat." It was also kind of loud, expensive (\$3,000), and heavy. It made the doll stiff in the torso, so that when the machine was off, "she lost the ability to sort of relax." Not everyone thought the Hip Actuator was a cool effect. It was a nightmare to install, so Matt discontinued it.

Another disappointment was the "Interactive Response System," in which small, very sensitive sensors were put in erogenous zones of the body. A bank of canned audio files would enable the doll to verbally "respond" based on where she was touched. During the



STRAIGHT FROM THE CRATE

Clockwise from above: a doll ready for shipment to a client; photographer Stacy Leigh with one of her RealDolls in her Manhattan loft; RealDoll heads; bathing dolls fresh from their molds.





development phase he touted it as “very interactive, to the point where there is an intelligence there,” and envisioned “thousands of responses and they will randomly mix together to form almost limitless combinations.”

It too was a nightmare to install and turned out to be like an X-rated Tickle Me Elmo. Instead of “That tickles!” the doll said things like “Ow!” and “Oh, that feels good” or simply moaned. “We did that for a while and it was cool—some people loved it,” Matt recalls halfheartedly. Others didn’t think it was worth the \$1,500. “But more people said, ‘Well, I don’t know if I want her to talk.’ I kind of like that it’s just a doll, and that’s kind of where sometimes I feel I am. You start adding all these other things, it’s not really just a doll anymore.”

The thought of getting back into robotics now is exciting but also intimidating and anxiety-inducing: “I feel like 10 years ago when I was doing this, I was completely content. I made dolls and I made them as beautiful as I could and it was a very free feeling. . . . I guess in a sense it makes you long for the simplicity of what used to be.”

It’s Alive!

At the end of *The Stepford Wives*, the evil, Dr. Frankenstein-like head of the Men’s Association—nicknamed “Diz” because he once worked in Disney’s animatronics department—responds to one of the last utterances of Katherine Ross’s doomed character, Joanna. “Why? Because we can,” Diz informs her. “We found a way of doing it that’s just perfect, perfect for us and perfect for you. . . . See, think of it the other way around: wouldn’t you like some perfect stud waiting on you around the house? Praising you? Servicing you? Whispering how your sagging flesh was beautiful, no matter how you looked?” Then the sexbot, an exact replica of Joanna except for its black, doll-like eyes and gravity-defying breasts, tightens a stocking and strangles her with it.

Matt calls it a very entertaining movie and concept. And creepy?

“Yeah, that’s *creepy*. But our goal would never be to do that, and whatever amount of technology I incorporate into our dolls

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as we go forward into the future will be geared at the simple goal of *enhancing* that interaction, not taking away from it. I would never see that being a threat to an organic woman at all.” Besides, females might have some options by the time fembots are commonplace: “They’re probably going to make robotic manbots, and don’t fool yourself: women will be in line, too,” he says. Like the Jude Law character

"Gigolo Joe," in *A.I.*? "Oh, sure. If you make a robot that is Johnny Depp-ish enough or whatever character at the time—of *course* they'll be open to it!

"Across-the-board, human sexuality is expanding into these other avenues and frontiers," he says. "We like to experience different types and flavors of sex, and that is our nature. And so I don't think necessarily this is something that needs to be a high level of concern. There's this big gap between what people fantasize about and what's possible even in the next decade. You know we're not quite there. When we're able to build a starship *Enterprise*, we'll have these kinds of robots that people fantasize about, but there's going to be a lot of steps between here and there."

Is animating dolls or giving them emotional intelligence the greatest desire?

"Well, the idea, the goal, the fantasy there, is to bring her to life, ultimately," he replies. But he admits that, given the choice between a beautiful woman and an animated doll, there are some who would still choose the latter. "They have a fetish for the *doll*. It has nothing to do with dehumanizing anyone. They have a fetish for this doll to be animated, and it has nothing to do with possessing them or controlling them. I mean, there are people out there who have sex with their *car*. There are people who have sexual fetishes about items of clothing or pieces of furniture—that's out there and doesn't dehumanize anyone. That's just their thing, man. So again: relax."

So women shouldn't be worried about being replaced by synthetic versions of themselves?

"No. Nor should men be worried that they'll be replaced by dildos."

Don't Feel Sorry for David Mills

Inside a booth at Red Lobster in downtown Huntington, David Mills is looking around for a waitress who used to be a stripper. One thing he will say for the Huntington area is there are some pretty good strip joints. People come from Charleston and all over. Every couple of months Mills goes to either Lady Godiva's or Southern X-Posure, where the strippers are fully nude onstage and give wonderful private lap dances.

"The only problem I have is there are a lot of fat strippers and they have tattoos," he says. "I mean, that just doesn't do it for me, though usually in an evening they'll have one or two that look really good and kind of classy-looking."

He says he isn't drinking tonight. Gets too carried away. Usually he will buy one 22-ounce bottle. "And that's all I have. But if I have like a 12-pack, I drink until I throw up, so I rarely drink."

Was he being serious about his offer to wash Taffy so I could test her out? "Yeah—I mean, that's fine with me," he replies. "That's perfectly fine. There is absolutely no possibility of catching anything at all. You can do it now or later when you come back. I was *not* kidding."

The only downside to Taffy is her weight, but "you can't demand a life-size doll that looks and feels exactly like a woman and expect the doll to weigh 10 pounds and throw it over your shoulder." Another issue is that dolls assume the ambient temperature. He is very interested to learn that McMullen is finalizing a design for a remote-control internal heating system so his customers won't have to use an electric blanket.

David doesn't sleep with Taffy. She stays on her tripod. What does he think of the term "love doll"? "That's *perverse*, man," he says, laughing. "You people from the big city disgust me." The waitress brings the check

and soon we are in the park by the Ohio River.

"Lewis and Clark sailed right past there," he says, adding that there used to be prostitutes here before the police cracked down. It's idyllic now. Gorgeous sunset, intoxicating air. Nice people strolling, children laughing, someone flying by on a Jet Ski. He finds the small plaque he bought to honor his second ex-wife (ANDREA + DAVID).

We end up at Roosters bar. The outdoor table overlooking downtown offers a view of the skyline and a peaceful, Norman Rockwell-like scene below. David shows off some cell-phone photos. First Taffy, then his first ex-wife looking voluptuous. Today it occurred to him that they look alike. He swipes past some "porn-related" photos and stops at the last woman who had sex with him before Taffy arrived—and, later, with him and his doll.

The waitress asks if we're O.K. He orders his first beer of the night.

What's an average day like for him now?

"Well, somebody will send me an e-mail: Oh, it's just so *sadddd*. I know you're *such* a *sad* person with this *doll* and I feel *soooo* sorry for you," he says, mocking this individual. "Well, here's how sorry you should feel for me: I sleep till 11, and if I want, maybe later. I get up. I sit around a couple hours, watch TV, maybe have lunch with my daughter if she comes. You know, go out to a restaurant and have a good dinner, come back, maybe watch some porn or TV. Maybe have a late-night snack, a beer or two, and go to bed. So don't feel sorry for me, for Christ's sake."

At 10 P.M. the waitress lets us know it's last call. "If I am the perv here, please remember you traveled halfway across the country to talk to a man who has a sex doll," David says, provoking laughter. "So, who's the perv here?"

Point taken. □

Sofia Vergara



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 118 mean tweet someone had written about her—"Sofia Vergara sounds like she has a dick in her mouth"—and then, without skipping a beat, shot back, "What's wrong with having a dick in my mouth?" And then she's got that whole Gloria thing going on, meaning she projects two equally erotic personas simultaneously: that of a bombshell forever exploding, and that of a peel-me-a-grape baby doll who

wants to spend her days curled in luxury's lap.

"I've never been so charmed by anyone in my whole life," says Reese Witherspoon, her co-star in the upcoming comedy *Hot Pursuit*, a cross between *Thelma & Louise* and *Beavis and Butt-Head Do America*, with a little *It Happened One Night* thrown in. And that's exactly my experience. Sofia's pretty much impossible not to like. There's a force-of-nature quality to her. You get swept up in the beauty and the glamour and the magnetism, the sense of fun and mischief. It's hard to keep your wits about you, to remember that she and Gloria are not the same woman, even if they seem like they are. That she isn't the trophy wife of some who's-your-sugar-daddy? geriatric who's dedicated his few remaining years to making her every wish his command, though she easily could have gone that route. That everything she's got she's earned, and that she can peel her own grapes, thank you very much. Which means ultra-feminine, glowingly carnal, charm-itself Sofia, all sumptuous smiles and curvaceous softness, has a tough-

hombre side, a macho side, even if it isn't visible. Has to because she overcame so many obstacles: early divorce, single motherhood, a brother kidnapped and murdered in Colombia, another brother deported from the U.S. after 30-plus arrests on drug-related charges, thyroid cancer at 28, and, finally, her stranger-in-a-strangeland-English-as-a-second-languageness.

That last one alone would have been enough to do in most people. It's just a fact: if you aren't a citizen of this country, you get treated differently. (Sofia didn't become a U.S. citizen until 2013.) And by "differently," of course, I mean worse. Says Sofia, "At the time [the 90s] there were no managers for TV personalities in the Latin market." According to Luis Balaguer, the man who would become her manager, the lack of representation was due, in large part, to Univision, which had a virtual monopoly on Spanish-speaking talent: "You needed to be careful. You needed to behave, because if Univision fired you, people would never hear from you again." And Univision did more

than discourage the hiring of managers. It also insisted that talent sign a contract—written in English, even though so much of the Univision talent could only *habla español*—in the room and on the spot, no lawyer to run a magnifying glass over that fine print. (Univision, incidentally, declined to comment for this article.) Sofia remembers, “I trained one of my interns to make calls for me and tell people how wonderful I was. Just so I wasn’t the one saying it.”

And, a few years later, when Sofia attempted to break out of Univision and into mainstream Hollywood, her first order of business was eliminating her accent. Only it wasn’t so easy to shake: “I hired the speech coach, and you have to work so much. It’s exhausting. It’s also boring. And I have a bad ear, you know? I’ve been in this country for 20-something years and I still sound like this. I still get confused, and it’s like, Is that girl retarded? So I was going to auditions and the only thing I could focus on was the position of the tongue. I was not acting. And then I thought, If I can’t get a job with my accent, this is not a job for me.” That was a major moment for her. It changed everything, because instead of continuing to try to Americanize, blend in, she hyper-Latinized, emphasized the ways in which she stuck out. And it was the making of her since, with the accent, she’s Lucille Ball and Ricky Ricardo in one. Without the accent, she’s—well, she’s unimaginable without the accent. Like Marilyn Monroe without the mole, Madonna without the gap tooth.

So, through a mixture of determination, nerve, shrewdness, and desperation, Sofia turned a liability into an asset. And staying true to the accent wasn’t her only move. She dyed her hair, which grows out of her head a dark shade of honey, so she looked more Latin, or at least what English-speaking America thought of as Latin. And though she’s no doubt naturally fiery and spicy and zesty and all other adjectives Taco Bell might use to describe its Crunchy Taco Supreme, i.e., adjectives so clichéd they practically qualify as ethnic slurs when applied to an individual of Latin heritage, she also exaggerates those aspects of her personality.

Her decision to go broad, though, does have its consequences. For example, she’s had to contend with the criticism that she perpetuates a stereotype. “If Gloria is a stereotype, so what? Who wouldn’t want to be Gloria?” So she pooh-poohs the charge, but she doesn’t, you’ll notice, deny it. And you could argue that on *Modern Family* she’s playing not so much a Colombian woman as a cartoon of a Colombian woman; that Gloria’s a dumb-blonde joke only brunette and with a racist twist; that Sofia got rich by exploiting her own people. And you’d have a point—a not-my-point point and a missing-the-point point, but a point. Not that it would be of any use to you since, point or no point, you’d be wrong.

Here’s how Sofia got rich: by exploiting the people who exploited her people. First, though,

two deceptions. Number one was perpetrated by *Forbes*, because calling Sofia the “highest-paid TV actress” is sneaky phrasing, as it implies that she makes most of her loot from her TV show, which she does not. She earns a reported \$325,000 per episode, serious cash, but nowhere near serious enough to get her to \$37 million, which, again according to *Forbes*, is how much she raked in last year. Number two was perpetrated by *moi* because earlier I described Luis Balaguer as Sofia’s manager, and he is, but that’s only half the story. He’s her business partner as well. They founded Latin World Entertainment (LatinWE) in the mid-90s as a talent-management company. Says Balaguer, a former music manager with a silky voice and lovely manners, “You know how people say they started from zero? We literally started from zero.”

LatinWE got off to a rocky start. Its first client, Fernando Fiore, Sofia’s co-host on *Fuera de Serie*, was let go by Univision when word leaked that he’d acquired representation, his contract not renewed. “It was a scary time,” says Balaguer. “We camped out in the parking lot and signed everyone who walked in and out the door.” The refusal to back down or off worked. Says Fiore, “Univision didn’t want to deal with us, but now they had to deal with us. LatinWE changed things. We paved the way for those younger. What [Charlie] Chaplin and [Douglas] Fairbanks did for the general talent in the 20s or whenever, we did for the Spanish-speaking talent in the 90s. We were pioneers.”

Sofia’s first celebrity endorsement deal was with Bally Total Fitness, in 1998. The commercial, featuring Sofia, was in Spanish, and, after it aired, an ecstatic Bally executive informed Sofia and Balaguer that, suddenly, Spanish-speaking people were lining up outside gym doors all across the nation to sweat off those love handles. The pair’s ears pricked. They’d been spoiling for an opportunity. Well, here it was. Says Balaguer, “It was clear that brands did not have a clue how to reach Hispanic people. A lot of the time their commercials were just English commercials dubbed in Spanish.” Basically, Sofia and Balaguer recognized that Latinos in this country were overlooked, not to mention underserved, and that there was *mucho dinero* to be made on this blunder, though even they didn’t guess how *mucho*.

LatinWE would go on to become a licensing, marketing, production, and new-media juggernaut. And when Sofia hit, as she says, “the jackpot,” with *Modern Family* in 2009, her value as a celebrity endorser went through the roof. “I’m the perfect candidate for any endorsement,” Sofia explains, “because they hire me and hit the English and Spanish markets at the same time.” And it’s through these endorsements—she’s the face of Diet Pepsi, Head & Shoulders, CoverGirl, and AT&T—that so much of her fortune comes. I should mention, too, the fragrance she launched for HSN and her line with Kay Jewelers and—Actually, I’ll stop there, because the list goes on and on and we don’t have all day.

How to Make It Look Easy Breezy

Sofia takes justifiable pride in her business savvy. About her theatrical talents, though, she’s far more modest. “I never wanted to be an actress,” she says. “I take acting as a gift, because it was nothing that I ever dreamed about growing up.” That she’s short-shrifting makes a certain kind of sense. She’s had, after all, no formal training, and getting laughs is easy for her, her comic timing every bit as super-abundant and God-given natural as her 32F breasts. She doesn’t have to go to Dustin-Hoffman-in-*Marathon-Man*-stay-awake-three-days-in-a-row lengths in order to believably embody Gloria. And *Hot Pursuit*, described by Witherspoon as “a culture-clash comedy,” looks like a hoot but not like a stretch. Sofia will be playing another hot-tamale Latina with an imperfect command of the English language. And, listen, I get it. She sticks with the same role for the same reason she sticks with the same outfit: because through sheer force of will she’s turned herself into a brand, and the characters she portrays and the clothes she wears are part of that brand. (“Sometimes you read in the press like, oh, Sofia is wearing again the same shape dress, and I want to answer them and say, What the fuck do you want me to wear? Obviously there’s a reason why that’s what I go for.”) Playing a hot-stuff Latina works for her just like playing a cuddly dumb-bunny blonde worked for Marilyn Monroe, or playing a cheekbone-y upper-class gamine worked for Audrey Hepburn. And why mess with a good thing?

She did, however, come close to messing with it once: 2012’s *The Paperboy*, a pulp noir set in the South during the summer of ’69, the weather sultry enough that you could practically see the sweat beads popping out on the camera’s lens, and directed by Lee Daniels (*Precious*). Sofia was originally cast as Charlotte Bless, an in-heat bottle blonde with fake lashes so long and so thick and so dark it looks as if a black-widow spider were dangling its legs off the end of each eyelid. The part involved a lot of secreting: perspiration, masturbation, and, most notably, urination. Charlotte wriggles out of her bikini bottom and pees all over Zac Efron’s chest and face after he’s swarmed by jellyfish. (“If anyone’s gonna piss on him, it’s gonna be me,” she snarls at a trio of concerned young beach bunnies.) A scheduling conflict forced Sofia to drop out of the movie. Nicole Kidman took her place. Kidman’s never been sleazier—or better. Still, though, I would’ve loved to have seen Sofia in the role, seen Miss-Universe-looks-but-Miss-Congeniality-personality, off-the-charts Q score, wholesomely sexy Gloria playing the nastiest piece of work below the Mason-Dixon Line. A jailhouse groupie and bit of swamp trash with a lewd curl to her lip—pure raunch.

We talk about *The Paperboy* fairly early in the conversation, and the only regrets expressed are mine. “I was lucky I was even on the list,” says Sofia. “If it worked, it worked. If it didn’t, it didn’t. It’s not something that I am thinking I

Sofia Vergara

have to show that I can also do serious things.” Subject closed.

Except not. We return to it in an indirect way just as we’re getting ready to wrap up. I ask Sofia about her behind-the-camera work on *Hot Pursuit* (she and Witherspoon are not only co-starring but co-producing), whether it’s a one-off or the first of many, and her response indicates that her earlier words about the missed opportunity of *The Paperboy* were more casual than her feelings. “I’m limited because of my accent, the way I look. And if I want to do more serious stuff I think I’m going to have to end up producing it myself.” She pauses, thinking a thought through, and then says, “There is one thing that I want to do one day, and my son is the one that has encouraged me. He said that I should do a movie, and the character should be a crazy

woman. Abusive or bipolar—a scary person.”

I don’t quite know what Sofia, or her son, has in mind, but I have a feeling that the next time Zac Efron—or any other up-and-coming hot young stud actor, for that matter—tangles with a school of jellyfish, Sofia will be ready to answer the call of duty by answering the call of nature.

How to Make an Exit

Coda: The interview is over. Sofia walked out five minutes before, her exit causing even more of a stir than her entrance, since the room is semi-crowded now. I’ve signed the check, but I’m still sitting at the table. Am busy fooling with my two tape recorders, making sure that there were no mid-dialogue shutoffs or battery poop-outs. A hand touches my shoulder. Startled, I look up. It’s Sofia. She says, sounding slightly embarrassed, “I didn’t mean to just leave you. Do you have enough money?” I flash back to my conversation with Luis Balaguer, him telling

me about LatinWE’s early days, how he and Sofia would arrange business lunches and then, when the meal was done and the potential client on his way, immediately start scrambling to pay the bill, inside-outing their pockets, digging for loose change at the bottom of their wallets. She must’ve been worried that that was what was happening to me now. Smiling, I promise her that I have it covered.

I expect her to turn away again, only she doesn’t, just stands there. She’s waiting for me, I realize after a few slack-jawed duh-duh seconds. Gathering up my recorders, my notebook and pen and cell phone, I jump to my feet. Then I fumble to cover my eyes with sunglasses because I know I don’t have what it takes, that I’ll crack under the pressure of all those gazes, will blush or nervous-laugh or break into a trot or, worse, trip. At last the sunglasses are in place, my bag hooked over my shoulder. Sofia and I exchange a nod, and then, together, we walk out of the room. □

Hershey vs. Cadbury



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 138 butcher operation and the other a tearoom mitigates the overlap and helps keep the peace. For expats, the pairing is a happy, homey confluence.

Both establishments are family concerns. At Tea & Sympathy, Nicky’s partner is her husband, Sean Kavanagh-Dowsett, 47, also English and a New Yorker since 1989. He claims he was attracted to Nicky without ever having set eyes on her, after a friend who had dined at the tearoom told him how Nicky had shot the friend an evil eye after he took a spoonful of a companion’s dessert: “It was like, Cheap bastard, why don’t you order your own dessert? He was like a deer in the headlights. He said, ‘Oh, I just wanted to see if it was Bird’s Custard’—which is the predominant brand of ready-made custard in the U.K.—to which she shouted across the restaurant the words that made me love her even before I met her: ‘Of course it’s fucking Bird’s!’”

Sean is possessed of a vaguely punky fashion sense—one day pairing a white, camouflage-print down vest with a bright-purple sweater and cheetah-print pants—which co-exists with a fondness for tweed caps. He is only a touch more temperate on the subject of Hershey than his wife, a bit of reflective yin to her charge-ahead yang. “Well, they’ve made themselves into the bad guys,” he said. “I mean, really. I would imag-

ine they’ve spent more in legal fees on this case than they are losing in the sale of English Cadbury’s all across the U.S.” At Carry On Tea & Sympathy, English chocolate sells “decently,” he said, though it serves more as a loss leader than as a profit center. (This is true as well at Myers of Keswick.) But chocolate, Sean said, “really taps into an emotion for people. It’s something you remember as a kid. I mean, there are all sorts of scientific studies showing how it elicits different emotional responses in the brain, in men and women. I mean, it’s a whole different—”

Nicky finished his thought for him: “It’s an orgasm without the sex.”

“It’s a very personal thing, chocolate,” Sean continued. “When I was growing up my mum was a small-business owner, and my dad died when I was 11, and he was ill for a while before that, so the next-door neighbor would look after me. She was like my nanny, and it was always a bit of a treat; when she’d pick me up from school, she’d quite often have a chocolate bar in her handbag. Chocolate is really evocative of that emotion for me.”

Nicky has an even more poignant chocolate memory—or sort of. Her mum was such a “chocoholic” that when she died, in 2009, the family buried her with a Dairy Milk bar, following a service that saw her casket adorned with a wreath of flowers in the shape of another Dairy Milk bar. (Apropos of nothing: Nicky’s mother, who co-founded a small classical-music label with her husband, used to babysit Elvis Costello, who today is an occasional customer at Tea & Sympathy. “She saw his bum and changed his nappy,” Nicky crowed.)

Lest you think expats have been playing to the cameras, as it were, over the Hershey-Cadbury row, you should know that chocolate is serious business in the U.K. Believe it or not, British sweet teeth are even sweeter than Amer-

icans’: on a per capita basis, they eat nearly twice as much “choc” as we do (which may also account for the famously sad state of their dental work). Roger Clark said that he has even sold chocolate bars to the English supermodel Kate Moss when she is in New York, contravening the famous maxim associated with her: “Nothing tastes as good as skinny feels.” (Or perhaps she was purchasing them for a friend?)

Candies made by the U.K. divisions of Nestlé and Mars have also been targeted by the Hershey suits, but no one seems to much care about those treats. “Cadbury and English people is like tea and English people,” Nicky said. And the brand does seem to be deeply entwined in the rituals and rhythms of British life. The English novelist Zadie Smith, who now lives in New York, confessed—or bragged—that in her youth she used to knock back a daily Cadbury Creme Egg. (“There’s almost no bad day that a single Cadbury’s Creme Egg can’t improve,” she said.) Sharon Osbourne, the London-born TV host and reality-show star, reminisced over the phone about stopping after school at the neighborhood sweetshop to pick up a daily Crunchie or a Flake, while her husband, Ozzy Osbourne, the lead singer for Black Sabbath, mumbled in the background about his own youthful love for solid penny chocolate bars. “I think Belgian chocolate is great, but nothing is like Cadbury,” Sharon said. “Cadbury is perfect.”

Tim Geary, the former membership and marketing director of Soho House and now holding a similar title at a private club in Los Angeles, said: “British Cadbury simply tastes like childhood. More than that, it’s the best of childhood because for most Brits there wasn’t much choice and certainly no excess. The chunks of milk chocolate and fruit and nut were measured out as treats. Four if you were really lucky. There’s a culture of puddings, and those were sweet, but chocolate was the treat.”

"Cadbury is drummed into English people and English children from a very early age," Roger Clark said. He cited the company's voluminous advertising, which carried extra impact in a nation that had only four TV channels in the pre-cable, pre-satellite era. In fact, according to the 2010 book *Chocolate Wars*, by Deborah Cadbury—a cousin to the company's founding family—Cadbury was an advertiser on the very first evening of commercial television in Britain, in 1955. Roger, like many other Brits, claims he can cite jingles and slogans for all the company's brands the way Americans of a certain age might brag about being able to rattle off the lineups for the 1951 Yankees, Giants, and Dodgers.

Roger tells a great story about a regular customer at Myers, an Englishman with a daughter, 10, New York-born and -raised, who had recently outgrown milk and wheat-protein allergies. She could now try chocolate for the first time in her life, and of course the father made sure that the chocolate was Cadbury. "He said the look on her face was just incredible, a sight to behold. And then she said, 'But I'm not going to be able to get it anymore?' When he told me that, he looked horrified."

Recipe for Disaster

If Hershey's version of Cadbury was the same thing as Cadbury's Cadbury, if they tasted alike, there might not be a problem. But they are not the same thing, with the Hershey product made from a different recipe, thanks to the demands of the American market. "I can't stand it. I think it tastes like shit," Sharon Osbourne said.

"Tastes like shit" turned out to be a common critique among British expats queried about Hershey chocolate, along with "tastes like spit-up" and, in a choice locution recorded by *The Guardian* in Brooklyn, "smells like stinky feet." Angry commentators have been filling Hershey's Facebook page with vows never to buy its products ever again, along with impertinent Photoshopped memes such as one of Queen Elizabeth holding Hershey bars in each hand and looking aghast. #BoycottHershey trended on Twitter after the news broke that L.B.B. was settling, but as Les Hinton, the Fleet Street veteran who served for four years as publisher of Rupert Murdoch's *Wall Street Journal* and is now a U.S. citizen, said, "It would be pointless even to attempt a boycott because real Englishmen never eat Hershey's. I accidentally bit into a Hershey's Kiss once. It tasted like glue." Zadie Smith agreed: "What Hershey's calls chocolate is not chocolate to a British person—it's like sawdust and ashes in your mouth." A South African woman who was raised on Cadbury said that the first time she tried a Kiss, while on a springtime visit to New York, she thought someone had pulled an April Fools' gag on her, substituting chalk for chocolate. "Americans like that?" she asked, repulsed by the memory.

Sampling an authentic Cadbury Dairy Milk

bar alongside the Hershey approximation suggests that the expats do indeed have a point. The former is creamy, not too sweet, and possessed of a delicate, almost floral flavor. The latter announces itself on the palate with notes of, well, nothing aside from a crumbly, chalky texture reminiscent of biting into a chewable vitamin. This unwelcome sensation is followed on the tongue by a shock of sweetness, a vague hint that there may be cocoa somewhere in the vicinity, and an acrid chemical aftertaste.

In fairness, one key difference between the two bars is mandated by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, which forbids the use of vegetable oil in any product that aspires to be sold in the U.S. as "milk chocolate." The British authorities have no such compunction, which, if you haven't tasted real Cadbury, you might think is gross. But, as Zadie Smith said, "no one else has to like it—not the Swiss or the French or the Americans—although they should all of course be given the opportunity to discover, as we have, just how good vegetable oil can taste."

Hershey's right to make Cadbury in the U.S. dates to 1988, when Hershey bought Cadbury's American Division. Jeff Beckman, the company's chief spokesman, said that the current U.S. recipe is the same one Cadbury itself used here. He didn't add that if expats want to gripe about Hershey's Cadbury they should direct their complaints homeward, but that was the implication. He couldn't say whether Hershey's legal team plans to file any further suits against other distributors or, worse, the specialty shops themselves, but he did concede that Hershey "prioritizes" such matters—which would seem to indicate the company is not going overboard here. He also said the lawsuits were filed in part due to an uptick in imports over the last several years, which have seen U.K. Cadbury increasingly available not just at Myers of Keswick and Tea & Sympathy but also quality-minded supermarket chains such as Fairway in New York (where you can find U.K. Dairy Milk and Crunchies) and Bristol Farms in Los Angeles (where I recently spotted Wispas and Curly Wurlys). In other words, someone in the import business, or more than someone, had gotten too greedy for his or her own good and provoked Hershey into no longer turning a blind eye.

"This is all about protecting our valuable brand assets," Beckman proclaimed via e-mail. And while Nicky Perry wouldn't use that language, she doesn't want Cadbury available in supermarkets any more than Hershey does: "I understand that! And the bleeding supermarkets don't need Cadbury to survive."

Now that Hershey has brushed back what it presumably views as the biggest offenders, the chocolate-import trade may well return to something approaching the old equilibrium. At both Myers of Keswick and Tea & Sympathy, the betting runs along those lines. At the same time, however, the threat raised by Hershey has shaken both stores, wounds that may linger under the surface for a while.

Hershey "is trying to take our comfort away from us," Nicky said. In her view, this is profoundly unfair, even cruel. "It's a life-line," Nicky said. "This is a very transient sort of city. It's not full of New Yorkers. It's full of people from everywhere. It's much harder to have tight ties and bonds with people when you're living in a transient city. A lot of us are here without family. A lot of us don't have the grandparents, or whatever it is."

"The auntie down the block," Sean put in. They reminisced about how people had gathered at the store, English and not, after Princess Diana died. "They wanted someone to cry with," Nicky remembered. "I just loved that."

"People wanted that sense of community. That's what we're really about," Sean said.

This is indisputably true: Myers of Keswick and Tea & Sympathy aren't just homes away from home for Londoners and Mancunians and Liverpoolians; they're vestiges as well of an increasingly vanishing Manhattan—outposts of quirky civilization in an increasingly homogenized, increasingly moneyed wilderness. That isolated, endangered feeling is tangible in this patch of northwest Greenwich Village, where the narcotizing glitz of the Meatpacking District is creeping in from one side; on the other, toward Seventh Avenue on the east, the neighborhood's fabric has been shredded by the closing five years ago of St. Vincent's Hospital, which is in the process of being replaced in part by the kind of luxury condo building that has become a blight across the island.

Jennifer Myers, 35, who took over her father Pete's store in 2008, is a living embodiment of that funkier, more organic New York, where she was born and raised. Her parents met through her mother's job as a flight attendant, which came in handy during the shop's early days, when she would fly products back from England in her luggage. Is Jennifer's mom British, too? I asked one afternoon at the store as we sipped tea at a small table in the back. "No, my mom is actually born in Cuba, German background, which made for interesting football matches at our house." Though her father is retired and now often away, he is still very much present "in opinion," as her cousin Roger put it. According to Jennifer, he maintains a patriarch's rights regarding certain stock: "Fry's Chocolate Cream, Fry's Peppermint Creams—classic, old-school chocolates. He absolutely loves them, so we get cases of them, but they're really not that popular." The sausages and savories continue to be made to his recipes, though Jennifer and Roger have been experimenting with new items, such as a chicken-and-leek pie.

Nicky, who moved to New York in 1981 at the age of 21 with "\$200 in my pocket," started her restaurant in 1990 with a \$40,000 investment, half from her father, half from a co-worker. "You could never do that today," she said. It helped, though, even then, that she had friends in the music business; in the earliest days, Fred

Hershey vs. Cadbury

Schneider of the B-52s used to stand outside on the sidewalk, sipping tea from a cup and saucer as a ready-made form of celebrity endorsement.

"There's a lot of difference between New York now and New York then," Sean said. "The idea of coming to New York and being able to get your toe on the ladder and do something like this—you can't afford it now unless you're some trustafarian."

There's a lot of difference between England now and England then, too. Back home, both Tea & Sympathy and Myers of Keswick might be just as quaint as they are in Manhattan, long since turned into wine bars or Tesco's. "Stores like this don't exist in England anymore—they're few and far between," Roger said as he finished with his sausages and cleaned up. "It's a one-stop shop people are liking now. Back in the day, it used to be a butcher, a baker, a fishmonger, a sweetshop. Now they just go to the supermarket. Even in my small little town of Keswick, my father had a butcher shop, but he closed it eight years ago because people prefer the one-stop scenario. Why would you go park the car three times when you can just go to the supermarket? Convenience, isn't it?"

End of an Empire

One more subject where there's a lot of difference between now and then: Cadbury itself. The company, which dates back to 1824, had been beloved by generations of Britons not just for its chocolate but also for its family-run, Quaker-inspired do-gooderism, most famously the model factory and utopian workers' village the company built in a then sylvan spot outside Birmingham in the late 19th century. Still on the field-trip circuit for English schoolchildren, Bournville is the factory town Charles Dickens might have designed had he ditched writing to become a chocolate baron,

and it's easy to imagine Cadbury's creative benevolence was on Roald Dahl's mind when he first conjured Willy Wonka. As it happens, Hershey's founder, Milton Hershey, who was raised by a Mennonite mother and educated by Quakers, was himself inspired by Bournville when, in 1903, he built the worker-friendly company town that bears his name in Pennsylvania. Though public, the Hershey Company is still controlled by the trust that runs a school for orphans that the childless Milton founded and to which he left the bulk of his estate. So one and a half cheers for Hershey, the ostensible villain in this piece.

As for Cadbury, after four generations of family rule, it was long ago sucked into the maw of the global economy: in 2010, following decades of mergers, acquisitions, and deacquisitions, the company was bought by Kraft, the American food giant that made its bones with Velveeta, in a hostile takeover worth \$19 billion. So, yes, the chocolaty totems of British childhood that expats have been manning the barricades for are, in fact, manufactured by a U.S.-owned company; the Dairy Milk bar, the Crunchie, and the Flake are now brothers and sisters in a vast corporate family that also includes Lunchables, Oreos, Tang, and Miracle Whip. It gets worse: Kraft spun off its overseas operations in 2012 as an entity called Mondelez International, "mondelez" being a made-up word that was apparently coined to suggest worldwide domination, along with deliciousness, to the ears of Romance-language speakers. For Brits and Americans, the name seems intended to carry with it some shred of Continental sophistication, though the headquarters are in Deerfield, Illinois.

Whether under the Kraft or Mondelez banner, American stewardship of Cadbury has resulted in one blunder after another: a factory in York shuttered after the company had promised during the takeover

to keep it open; the Dairy Milk bar downsized in all but price; an ad campaign for a new bar, Dairy Milk Bliss, withdrawn and apologized for after the slogan, "Move over Naomi, there's a new diva in town," was attacked as racist for comparing the model Naomi Campbell, who is black, to chocolate; the discontinuation, last year, of chocolate coins for Christmas, a beloved stocking tradition. (Imagine how Americans would feel if Peeps were discontinued for Easter; then imagine if Peeps actually tasted good.) This year—the most egregious offense of all—Cadbury has changed the coating on its Creme Eggs from the traditional Dairy Milk to something called "standard cocoa mix chocolate," or, in the weasel-speak of a Cadbury mouthpiece, "similar, but not exactly Dairy Milk." That's a move better suited to J. K. Rowling's Dolores Umbridge than Roald Dahl's Willy Wonka. *The Guardian* captured the general tenor of public reaction in Britain when it proclaimed the new shell "disgusting, foul, vomit-inducing."

It happened to be at Carry On Tea & Sympathy when Perry opened up her first shipment of the new-formula Creme Eggs for Easter. (As of early March, the Cadbury was still flowing, fingers crossed.) She'd ordered only the Minis. "I canceled the big ones out of fury over them changing the chocolate!" she said. "They're doing terrible things!" She unwrapped one of the Minis, took a bite, and made a face. "This is American chocolate. This does not taste the same! There's a definite slight aftertaste."

She asked the young man at the register, Andy Stuttard, who arrived in New York not long ago from Yorkshire, if he'd tried one. He had. "It's awright," he said blandly, sounding unconvinced. □

Orson Welles



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 151 get on the phone, and talk someone through his job until Welles summoned him back.

Once, having replaced Marshall with actor Peter Jason, Welles demanded, "Nineteen hippies! I want beards on them! And I need them today!"

Jason immediately called Marshall, who sent him to Arizona State University, where he could round up students with the offer of free hot dogs, beer, and a chance to meet Rich Little.

Then, however, they needed a generator, and Jason told Orson he had no idea how to get one.

"Well! Who does!?", Welles screamed.

"Frank," Jason told him.

"He's in Hollywood!," Orson replied.

Jason then explained that Marshall could be there in five minutes, and Orson immediately roared, "Well! Get him back here!"

When Marshall returned, Welles didn't apologize. Instead, he said, "Frank, what we need is a generator, and we need it in..." Marshall, however, understood. He knew Orson needed him, which is why he never left.

By March 1974 they'd made serious progress, but there was also confusion, since almost nobody seemed to understand the plot beyond their own role. Huston knew more than others, but every scene seemed to exist primarily in Orson's head. And there were even days when Welles seemed confused by what he was filming and why he was filming it.

Had that not been enough, Welles faced a massive crisis when Rich Little was fired (according to some) or, as the comedian tells it, simply left the set in order to fulfill several sold-out, scheduled stand-up gigs that Orson had known about when he'd hired Little.

Either way, Frank Marshall says, Little was suddenly gone. Finding himself left with a mountain of useless footage, Welles went into a tailspin, and everything shut down. Then, however, Orson gathered his energy, refocused, and moved forward.

"Orson used it as a way to start over," Marshall said.

In order to do that he needed a new Otterlake, which he found in the form of the man who'd inspired the character in the first place: Peter Bogdanovich. Though now an important director, with three consecutive hit movies (*The Last Picture Show*, *What's Up, Doc?*, and *Paper Moon*), the brash, confident Bogdanovich still worshipped Welles, and they frequently spoke on the phone at lunchtime—calls during which Orson had no problem letting others hear how cruelly dismissive he could be to his protégé. Welles demonstrated this one day when Bogdanovich sought his advice on an upcoming film and Orson suggested that he "shoot it in black and white," echoing guidance he'd given him on *The Last Picture Show*. Hanging up the phone, Welles turned to the crew and exploded into laughter, "Black and white!"

But on March 13 the tone was different as Orson explained his situation and Bogdanovich immediately offered to take on the role of Otterlake.

"That never occurred to me," Welles said.

"The guy's a young film director who's had three hits and he does impressions all the time—and it never occurred to you?" Bogdanovich asked.

When Orson mentioned that Bogdanovich (who later recounted the conversation for *Bright Lights Film Journal*) was already playing one of the critics, the young director said they could just re-shoot those scenes with someone else.

"My God," Orson replied. "Of course you could do it. You'd be great for it. My God, will you? You just saved my life."

Arriving the next day, Bogdanovich added a strange new element to the set, where everyone knew that Orson had cast the person on whom the character was based.

"When Peter came in to play Peter, it was bizarre," Marshall said.

It was more than bizarre. It was so surreal that you couldn't make it up.

Toward the end of March, Huston got behind the wheel of a convertible to film a scene in which Hannaford drives to his birthday party. Bogdanovich sat next to him in the front, while Orson and Graver squeezed in the back with cameras and strapped another one to the side of the car.

"Don't worry," Welles assured crew mem-

ber Larry Jackson, who was lying on the trunk and holding a boom mike. "We won't even be going that fast."

Before the cameras began to roll, Huston confessed that he'd long ago concluded that drinking and driving didn't mix, so he'd decided to choose one or the other. Drinking won and for decades he'd barely been behind the wheel. He was, however, willing to give it a shot.

Undeterred, Orson yelled "Action!," and Huston (who'd already consumed a fair amount of vodka that day) swerved onto the road—and promptly drove the wrong way up a highway exit ramp, which sent them directly into oncoming traffic while Jackson clung to the trunk thinking, The obituary won't even mention that I was here.



BETWEEN THE LINES

Welles, Bogdanovich, and Joseph McBride on the first day of shooting, in August 1970.

With the cameras rolling and everyone shrieking in terror, Huston swerved around the oncoming cars until he saw an opening and jumped the median, calmly joining the flow of traffic on the other side.

When they got off the highway, Huston pulled over, and Welles emitted a gigantic sigh.

"Thanks, John," he said. "That'll do."

The Arizona shoot didn't end well. Beseated by financial problems and with the supply of funds seeming to dwindle, Welles suddenly found himself without money. Soon there were allegations that someone had been stealing from the production account.

Orson returned to Los Angeles and continued filming that spring before heading to Paris, where he spent the summer and fall editing the picture. While he was there, tension began mounting between Welles and his editing crew. He'd also grown mistrustful of Boushshri's Astrophore (now his sole partner after rescuing him from the situation in Arizona and providing new funding for the film) and

feared they were going to seize creative control of his picture—as others had done in the past.

Toward the end of 1974, the editing crew arrived one morning to find that the film was gone. Not long afterward, the producers discovered that Orson had taken it to Rome, where he was editing clips that he intended to show at an American Film Institute Life Achievement Award ceremony in his honor early the next year. Welles believed the event would be his salvation, and planned to use it as a showcase for *The Other Side of the Wind* and a way to fund its completion.

1975

The beginning of the end came when a small committee from A.F.I. met at the Beverly Hills Hotel to choose the recipient of its third Life Achievement Award. Options included everyone in Hollywood who wasn't named John Ford or Jimmy Cagney (the first two recipients). The group chose Welles because it considered him a superlative artist and wanted to make a statement about the organization.

"We made the choice on the grounds that it was a choice of great integrity," said A.F.I. founding director George Stevens Jr. "It was a way of saying we were serious about this award and that it wasn't going to be a popularity contest."

A popularity contest it was not, as there was negative feedback from several A.F.I. members, some factions of the Hollywood press, director Henry Hathaway, and Kirk Douglas, who, according to Stevens, was outraged.

Then, however, there was potential recipient William Wyler, who went out of his way to congratulate Orson, and there were also many staunch defenders, including Bogdanovich, Charlton Heston, and Frank Sinatra—who was hosting the February 9 ceremony.

Though he was excited about the opportunity afforded by the A.F.I. award, Welles had initially been conflicted when the honor was offered, and agreed to accept it only after being assured that its intention was to show that he was still a vibrant filmmaker.

There was also the fact that Orson hated awards shows.

Four years earlier, when the Academy had offered him an honorary Oscar, Welles was almost offended since—at 55—he was receiving the same award as Lillian Gish, who'd been in more than 40 movies before Orson was even born. The Oscar, he thought, was

Orson Welles

Hollywood's way of sending him to the old directors' home. But he had no interest in accepting his gold watch.

"They're not going to get me to do that," he told Bogdanovich.

That year (1971), George C. Scott flatly declined his best-actor award for *Patton*, declaring the ceremony a "two-hour meat parade." But with Orson it was more complicated. Everything with Orson was more complicated. And in this case his intention was to accept the honorary Oscar without actually accepting it.

So, instead of saying no, Welles claimed he was making a picture in Europe and sent Huston to accept the trophy in his stead. But when his friend raised the Oscar and said he'd drop it off for Orson in Spain while "on my way back to Ireland," Welles was only 10 miles away, watching it all on television in a bungalow at the Beverly Hills Hotel.

"Thanks, John," he said with a laugh. "Bring it over!"

But A.F.I. was different. Approaching 60, Orson hadn't changed his mind about awards and gave Stevens a rough ride by insinuating that he might not show up for the show unless things were arranged the way he wanted them—and then didn't return from Europe until a few days before the ceremony.

That said, Welles had honed several clips from *The Other Side of the Wind* right up until the last minute, at a time when he was experiencing massive anxiety over some tax problems that he feared might lead to an embarrassing confrontation with a revenue agent or process server during the ceremony. This only added to Orson's fear and apprehension about his future, the film, and everything else as he headed back to Hollywood with his beautifully edited scenes.

Joining Orson in Los Angeles was Bousheshri and one of the French producers from Astrophore, which had taken out an ad in *Variety* trumpeting the film as "Nearing Completion" and had scheduled numerous screenings of a rough assemblage of what they'd shot for the following week—hoping that they'd be able to secure distribution and financing quickly thereafter.

On February 9, 1975, 1,200 people gathered in the ballroom at the Century Plaza Hotel for the \$125-a-plate A.F.I. dinner, where the guests included Rock Hudson, Groucho Marx, Jack Lemmon, Natalie Wood, Ryan O'Neal, Janet Leigh, Rosalind Russell, Jack Nicholson, and many other stars and industry power players.

In the ballroom, giant blowups of Welles hung behind the stage. Rendered in black and white, they showed Orson in different roles at different ages and at vastly different sizes. There he was, huge, bearded, and hearty as Falstaff, then young and handsome as Michael O'Hara in *The Lady from Shanghai*,

commanding as Charles Foster Kane, and despicable as the bloated Quinlan, *Touch of Evil*'s corrupt cop, who doesn't have any future because his is all used up.

But, on this evening, Orson was there to show that, in contrast to Quinlan, his future still lay before him. And because of this, Welles came to the Century Plaza that night ready to play ball, which meant showing genuine, heart-felt emotion during tributes from Johnny Carson, Ingrid Bergman, Edgar Bergen, and others. It also meant sitting through Sinatra singing "The Gentleman Is a Champ," which began:

There's no one like him,
But no one at all.
There have been legends,
But none quite as tall.
What if his girth,
Is—like—wall-to-wall;
You know this gentleman is a champ!

When the camera turned to Orson, he was laughing louder than anyone.

After Sinatra, A.F.I. director George Stevens Jr. introduced Welles by addressing the status of artists in an industry that was obsessed with box-office receipts. Reminding the crowd of the trials Orson had endured in creating stunning films under difficult circumstances, Stevens explained that they were gathering on this evening to recognize his "courage and the intensity of his personal vision," and pointed out that the man they were there to honor "reminds us that it is better to live one day as a lion than a hundred years as a sheep."

"A great man never reminds us of others," Stevens said. "Mr. Orson Welles."

Rising from his table, Orson steamed toward the stage like a locomotive and arrived at the podium nearly breathless. Genuinely moved, he smoothed his beard while everyone applauded.

Then, when they sat, Welles launched into a clever, emotional, and risky speech. "My father once told me that the art of receiving a compliment is of all things the sign of a civilized man. And he died soon afterwards, leaving my education in this important matter sadly incomplete," Orson began. "I'm only glad that on this, the occasion of the rarest compliment he ever could have dreamed of, that he isn't here to see his son so publicly at a loss. . . . My heart is full. With a full heart—with all of it—I thank you."

Then he spoke about "contrarities," using that topic to explain that while he might be considered difficult, or temperamentally unlike other directors, those things were part of what made him Orson Welles, one of a dying breed of filmmakers who chose to "trudge stubbornly along a lonely rocky road," not unlike the small family farm that hobbles along doing its thing in a world of corporate agriculture.

These qualities, he said, didn't make him special or better, "just different."

In the end, Welles explained, he was nothing more than that most American of all archetypes: the maverick.

"This honor," he said, "I can only accept in the name of all the mavericks. And also as a tribute to the generosity of all the rest of you," meaning the studios, producers, and other people who provided the money to make movies.

In just a few short minutes, Orson Welles had turned himself from an *enfant terrible* and profligate artist into a humble, lovable old rebel who just wanted to make movies the way he wanted to make them. What was so wrong with that?

Now, with the crowd in his hands, Orson went further, neutralizing his image as "crazy Welles" by speaking directly to it and explaining that his maverick ways meant that "some of the necessities to which I am a slave are different from yours. As a director, for instance, I pay myself out of my acting jobs. I use my own work to subsidize my work. In other words, I'm crazy."

The room exploded. He had them.

"But not crazy enough to pretend to be free," Orson said. "But it's a fact that many of the films you've seen tonight could never have been made otherwise. Or, if otherwise, well, they might have been better. But certainly they wouldn't have been mine."

With that, he offered a toast: "[Let's] drink together to what really matters to us all—to our crazy and beloved profession. To the movies—to good movies—to every possible kind."

Which is where he probably should have stopped, in a moment of brotherhood, triumph, and goodwill. Welles had already shown a clip from *The Other Side of the Wind*, and he could have just gone to the after-party, had a few drinks, smoked some cigars, and gathered a rapt audience to whom he could have casually mentioned needing end money for his remarkable new film. But, instead, Orson showed one last scene, which he introduced in a voice that seemed barbed with arch humor.

The scene takes place in a screening room where a Hannaford associate tries to sell the director's unfinished movie (for which he—just like Orson—needs end money) to a handsome young studio boss based on Robert Evans, which made things uncomfortable. But, worse, the sequence revealed that Hannaford's film has no dialogue, no story line, and is nothing but a gorgeously shot disaster that even his own representative can't explain.

The end of the scene plays out as follows:

Studio Boss: I'd better read the script. [Silence.] You haven't got one? . . . Jake is just making it up as he goes along?

Hannaford's Associate (weakly): He's done it before . . .

When the ceremony was over, Welles and Sinatra hopped into an elevator up to the after-party. But, before the doors could close, a man stuck his arm inside and slapped a subpoena on Orson's chest. Casually, Welles stuck the envelope in his pocket, the doors closed, and off they went.

Welles always claimed that there had been an offer of end money after the A.F.I. event, and that the offer was then rejected by Astrophore, in expectation that there were going to be other—even better—offers. Bogdanovich, however, doesn't recall a single studio or producer wanting to give Orson money to finish his movie about the director who needs money to finish his movie.

"That was the horrible irony of the whole thing," he says. "Everyone applauded wildly, but no one came up with a cent."

Orson spent the rest of his life battling for control of the film and seeking money for its completion. It's a fight that continued after his death, in 1985, when it was taken up by Graver and countless others who thought they might be the one to finally complete Orson's last movie.

What each and every one of them experienced was a project that seemed under a curse comprising greed, peculiar French copyright laws, jealousies and grudges, bad judgment, complicated ownership disagreements, a messy estate, and a list of individuals


who believed they had some legal, financial, moral, or artistic right to the film itself.

Gary Graver died of cancer in 2006, after having spent more than 35 years of his life working on the film. Seeing Joe McBride at a Welles festival not long before, Graver talked about how he was still working for Orson. "I never stopped," Graver said.

Last fall, producers Filip Jan Rymysza, Jens Koethner Kaul, and Frank Marshall (now one of Hollywood's most successful producers) struck a deal with Astrophore and Welles's heirs that has put them closer than anyone has ever been to getting *The Other Side of the Wind* out of the can and onto movie screens.

Until the final credits roll, however, Orson's last movie continues to bear an eerie resemblance to the plot of his own film and the fate of Hannaford's picture.

And as for questions as to what *The Other Side of the Wind* was really all about? Welles may have supplied the answer in a conversation he once had with Mike Nichols. Though the pair weren't specifically discussing the film, Nichols recalled Welles saying this:



ON THE COVER

Sofia Vergara wears a dress by Zac Posen; fur by Sprung Frères; earrings by Ben-Amun by Isaac Manevitz. Hair products by Serge Normant.

Makeup products by CoverGirl. Body products by Charlotte Tilbury. Nail enamel by Deborah Lippmann. Hair by Serge Normant. Makeup by Charlotte Tilbury. Manicure by Deborah Lippmann. Set design by Mary Howard Studio. Produced on location by Portfolio One. Styled by Jessica Diehl. Photographed exclusively for V.F. by Annie Leibovitz at the Smith-Costas residence, in Rancho Mirage, California. For details, go to VF.com/credits.

"Leave it to the other guys, the people whose whole job it is to do that, to make patterns and say what the thread is through your work and where you stand... Let somebody else worry about what it means." □

NBC News



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 128 perhaps even having her replace Savannah Guthrie. Turness coolly agreed to take his views under advisement. The very next day the *New York Post* carried a blind item suggesting Turness was about to be fired. Among the candidates to replace her, it said, was Jamie Horowitz.

Turness had had enough. That Friday morning she summoned Horowitz to her office. "I don't trust you," she told him. "Nothing that you've proposed is ever going to happen if I don't trust you." When Horowitz asked what he could do, Turness replied, "That's up to you." When Turness relayed news of the meeting to Fili, Fili scheduled her own meeting with Horowitz for Monday. But that meeting never happened. It was then, Horowitz's defenders argue, that Matt Lauer intervened to get Horowitz fired. "That weekend is when Matt went to Pat and Steve Burke and made clear he was not going to let [any of the proposed changes] happen," says one. "He said he wanted to protect the people that were there. He said, in essence, 'This guy has to be stopped.' And Burke and Pat buckled.

They gave in to Matt and agreed to fire Jamie."

NBC loyalists fiercely deny this. "Completely untrue, 100 percent untrue," responds one. "I understand the theory, but frankly I reject it. Matt did not go to Steve. Ever. Jamie was fired because it was an intolerable situation." In fact, another NBC loyalist confirms that Lauer had spoken to Burke, weeks earlier, during one of their regular lunches. Horowitz had run many of his proposed changes by Lauer, and Lauer told Burke he had "deep concerns." "Jamie ran into Matt Lauer—it's as simple as that," says one longtime NBC observer. "Don't believe anything else."

Whatever happened that weekend, the final blow landed on Monday morning, when a reporter for *Us Weekly* called for comment on a report that Horowitz wanted to fire Savannah Guthrie. Turness was apoplectic. "We have to fire him—today," Turness told Fili, who agreed. Turness called him in, fired him, then was obliged to issue an embarrassing press release denying all the rumors of imminent change at *Today*. The upshot of the whole episode was that whatever changes she wanted to make she now couldn't.

The Horowitz incident was a very public embarrassment, but because no one involved seemed eager to discuss it, it soon disappeared from the headlines. Not so the extraordinary situation that beset Brian Williams.

Coming Under Fire

A hint of the trouble to come, and of the tensions among the marquee players, was on display at a charity gala in Greenwich, Connecticut, the week before Horowitz's firing. The evening honored Tom Brokaw's work for

the Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation, which helps fight a cancer from which Brokaw suffers. "The lowest of lows had to be that dinner," says one former NBC executive. "It was a huge deal for Tom. The world turned out. Tom was devastated to find out that Pat Fili, who is just so blind to the relationships and what really went on, told the people putting on the dinner that it would be great to have Brian introduce Tom. That was the last thing Tom wanted. And then Brian started off telling stories. He told the Berlin Wall story. Well, this sent Tom into spasms of anger."

The "Berlin Wall story" was one Williams has long told—and apparently embellished—about the time he and Brokaw visited the Berlin Wall, in 1989. "This is the perfect example of what Brian does," says a former NBC executive who worked closely with Williams for years. "He will say, and I've heard this a hundred times, 'When Tom and I were at the Berlin Wall... O.K., so when he tells that story, he kind of implies that when the wall fell he was there with Tom. But he wasn't. He was there the next day. It wasn't malicious—it's just Brian being Brian. It's the part of Brian's personality that bothers Tom the most.'"

This executive long believed that Williams's penchant for embellishment was a function of his insecurity when it came to Brokaw, but that it was all essentially harmless. "I always felt he needed to jack up his stories because he was trying so hard to overcome his insecurities," this executive says. "And he had to follow Tom, which brought its own set of insecurities. He likes to sort of tell these grandiose tales. But, can I tell you, in all the years we worked together, it never rose to the point

where we said, 'Oh, there he goes again.' I just saw it as one of the quirks of his personality." It was a quirk, however, that incensed Brokaw, who is still thought highly of inside the news division. "Tom treated that anchor chair as a public trust," says one former correspondent. "He really was our Walter Cronkite."

"Tom and Brian," one longtime friend of both men says with a sigh, "that was never a good relationship. Tom pushed for him to get that job. But Brian never embraced Tom. And I don't know why. . . . He knows the rank and file will never love him like they did Tom, so he never tries. That's the reason there's not a lot of support for Brian over there." An industry insider adds, "There is also a lot of envy of Williams's movie-star good looks, his long happy marriage to a wonderful woman, great kids, and he's paid millions to read a thousand words five times a week from a teleprompter."

None of this—not the ill will between Brokaw and Williams, certainly not Williams's penchant for embellishment—registered on Turness's or Fili's radar as they belatedly turned their attention to *Nightly News* last fall. For much of Turness's tenure she hadn't needed to tread on Williams's turf; his show was No. 1 in the ratings, and other shows demanded her attention. The two had a relationship that friends describe as cordial but not close. At Matt Lauer's suggestion, Turness gave Williams one of Edward R. Murrow's old desks as a present on his 10th anniversary in the anchor chair, in December. Williams accepted it graciously, though one suspects the multi-million-dollar contract (reportedly up to \$10 million a year) NBC offered was even more welcome. The new contract was a vote of confidence in Williams at a time he was facing his first serious ratings challenge in years, from a 41-year-old newcomer named David Muir, who had taken over ABC News's nightly broadcast.

A month later, on an unremarkable Friday evening in late January, Williams ended his broadcast by thanking a soldier whom he had taken to a hockey game at Madison Square Garden and who, he said, had been among those who had come to his rescue when a helicopter he was on came under rocket attack in Iraq in 2003. Turness saw the story and liked it, terming it "very sweet." What she liked even more, she told one listener, was its performance once it was posted to Facebook, which she called "extremely good."

As the world now knows, the story was not accurate; Williams had been on a helicopter that came upon the damaged chopper about an hour later. As it happened, a pilot involved in the incident saw the broadcast and that evening wrote a Facebook post insisting Williams's version couldn't be true. When Williams learned of the claim, which was subsequently seconded

by several other soldiers, he did not tell Turness or Pat Fili, even though he and Fili had lunch the following Tuesday.

By then, a *Stars and Stripes* reporter named Travis Tritten had been tipped off to the exchange. On Tuesday he spent the day talking to five former soldiers, all of whom said Williams's helicopter had not in fact come under fire. Wednesday morning Tritten called NBC.

"They found out about this from a reporter! Amazing!" seethes a onetime NBC executive. A former NBC correspondent marvels that Williams did not tell Turness or Fili: "The very fact they only learned about it that day tells you they had no relationship with [their stars]."

Even after Turness learned of the situation, that afternoon, she remained only peripherally involved in drafting the apology. "Believe me, if Zucker had been there, someone like Allison Gollust [a longtime NBC News P.R. chief, now at CNN] would've been sitting with him for days working out the wording of this apology. The lack of a relationship with Turness played a huge role in how this played out. Because it was the apology that caused the problem, not the crime itself."

Steve Burke learned of things only after the apology broadcast. Even then the enormity of Williams's gaffes had yet to sink in. According to insiders, it wasn't until someone found a video clip of Williams telling a version of the same story on David Letterman's show in 2013 that Turness and Fili realized how much trouble Williams was in. "When we watched the *Letterman* clip, [the reaction was] horror, absolute horror," says one insider. "You could tell this was going to be very bad. It put us into a whole new universe."

Thursday morning Burke convened a crisis group, including Turness and Fili, that he said would meet twice a day at his Upper West Side apartment. Its first priority was unearthing the truth about what had happened in 2003. Williams himself, they soon realized, would be of little help. He appeared shell-shocked. "He was having a tough enough time coming to grips with the idea that he had gotten it wrong in the first place, slash misrepresented it, slash lied," recalls one insider. "He wasn't anywhere in the ballpark of being helpful about what happened 12 years ago."

"You talked to Brian, and he said, 'I slept two nights under the wing of that helicopter, looking up through the hole in the wing [from the rocket fire],' " one insider recalls. "There was a sandstorm, and somehow, in the process, he said, he must have come to believe he had been on the helicopter. Later, his wife [Jane] tried to explain. She said he put things in boxes [in his mind]. He would only talk about what was in those boxes on-camera." This insider stops and sighs. "You're not going to get clarity, because the people who might understand what happened don't understand."

Turness asked Richard Esposito, who had been hired away from ABC in 2013 to be NBC's senior executive producer of the investigative unit, to convene a group to examine the facts of the helicopter incident, as well as those of other possible Williams embellishments popping up online, from his sight of a dead body floating through the French Quarter during Hurricane Katrina to stories he told of hobnobbing with members of the navy's SEAL Team Six.

That Friday, with the story still dominating national headlines, Williams quietly told Burke he was willing to leave his broadcast until the matter could be cleared up. Williams's agent and lawyer, the respected Bob Barnett, suggested they table the discussion until the weekend. "Everybody was sort of heartbroken for Brian," says one loyalist. "It was terrible for the company, yes, but it was just awful for him. It was one of the fastest falls I can remember seeing. There was a little bit of shell shock. What we decided to do was we needed the weekend to come. We needed some distance."

Saturday morning all the NBC brass but Burke met with Williams and Barnett at the anchorman's 58th Street apartment. The sense of the group was that Williams had no choice but to step aside, and Williams, to his credit, made no efforts to fight back. The next day, Sunday, Burke convened an all-day meeting of the crisis group back at his apartment. They began with a 45-minute presentation from Esposito on his preliminary findings.

"At that moment Brian assumed he was coming back in a week, four days—something," says a person who was at the meeting. "Esposito took a perfunctory look at all this stuff [coming in] over the transom, and his clear sense was all this other stuff couldn't be easily dismissed. Our judgment was there was no way we could bring Brian back quickly and be able to categorically deny and prove wrong all of these [other] things in the near term."

By nightfall the group agreed that a suspension was in order, probably for six months, a period that would, if nothing else, give them time to study the extent of Williams's transgressions. Afterward, Burke took the time to confer with Brokaw, who had canceled a Caribbean vacation to be available. "Tom will never say this for the record, but I've talked to him about this, and I can tell you for a fact Tom is livid about this," says a friend. "Tom didn't push Brian out, but he didn't try to save him, either."

Burke reconvened the crisis group for one final meeting in his conference room the next day, found everyone still in agreement on the six-month suspension, and e-mailed Williams to come to his apartment the next morning, Tuesday. The two men met there alone. "It was sad but amicable, no harsh words," says the NBC partisan. "Steve told him it would be six months, and Brian accepted that. Was there pushback?

It wasn't available, to be honest. Steve basically said to Brian, "This is what we're going to do, and we're not going to discuss it. If you want to come back, this is what it will take."

Publicly, at least, that was the end of it. Behind the scenes, a number of Williams's closest friends have lobbied hard that he be allowed to return to *Nightly News* after his suspension. The Esposito investigation, however, is ongoing, and people who have spoken to Esposito say his group has compiled a number of other incidents that, taken as a whole, paint a portrait of Williams as a man who has consistently burnished his stories. While he has accepted responsibility for his actions, friends say, Williams is bitter, especially at

those who he believes might have saved him.

"I talked to Brian about this," says one friend, "and I'll never forget what he said at the end. He said, 'Chalk one up for Brokaw.'"

Williams's future, NBC insiders insist, remains up in the air. He and Andy Lack are close friends, leading to widespread speculation that Lack will reinstate him once his suspension is complete. But people close to Lack say nothing has yet been decided. Many NBC observers simply can't imagine a network anchorman ever returning to his former position after being exposed as Williams has. The most Machiavellian scenario, floated by an NBC partisan, is that Jeff Zucker, whose

distaste for Comcast executives is well known, has fanned the flames of controversy so that he can eventually snare Williams for CNN—not as a newsman but as the long-sought replacement for Larry King. "That's the perfect solution," a source says. "Zucker gets a star, and Brian gets the talk show he always wanted."

Another NBC partisan points out that Comcast is simply suffering much the same pain General Electric did in the late 1980s in purchasing a news division it knew little about managing, suffering a scandal as a result (the *Dateline* truck incident for G.E.), and then cleaning house and bringing in Lack to fix it. "Don't you see?" this person says. "It's all happening again, just 20 years later." □

Saul Bellow Biography



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 133 only from Helen, Annie, Jara, and Alina" but also from Maryi, Hannah, Daniela, Maude, and Iline. As the first volume of *The Life* closes, Bellow is halfway through his matrimonial career; we know that there are two more divorces to go (Susan, Alexandra) before all is solved and salved with Janis, his true Platonic other. Hope triumphed over disappointment, and innocence triumphed over experience.

Something similar unfolded in the fiction. Again and again in his *Letters* (assembled in 2010), Bellow describes himself as a "comic" novelist, and this feels just. But there was little sign of such a cheerful self-assessment, and such an outcome, in his "prentice works" of the 1940s, *Dangling Man* and *The Victim*, which epitomize the sullen, cussed earnestness of the midcentury mood. His life-changing moment came with the conceptual birth of *The Adventures of Augie March* (1953) and took place, fittingly, in Paris—the world HQ of

cerebral gloom. Bellow was in despair about his third novel, and with good reason: it was about two invalids in a hospital room. As he paced the streets one day Bellow watched the gutters being sluiced in "sunny iridescence." And it was a comprehensive epiphany: that was that. Marx, Trotsky, Sartre, *cafard*, *nausée*, alienation, existential woe, the Void, et cetera: all this he canceled and cursed. From here on he would commit himself to the free-flowing, and to the childhood perceptions of his "first heart" and his "original eyes." In short, he would trust his soul. And now the path was clear to the exuberantly meshuga glories of Augie March, Henderson, Herzog, and all the rest.

I knew Saul Bellow for two decades; I have known Professor Leader for three, and he is the author of a much-praised biography of my father, Kingsley Amis. So, full disclosure. It is, however, certain that I will not be alone in the expectation that *The Life of Saul Bellow* will prove definitive. Leader is respectful but unimpressed, balanced but never anodyne, and his literary criticism, like his prose, is unfailingly stylish and acute. The book is very learned and very long—the author happens to be a putter-in, not a leaver-out. But readers who enter into it will find a multitude of various fascinations: the gangland machine of Chicago, for instance; the tremors and preperceptions of the sexual revolution; Bellow's Romantic lineage (the affinities with Blake and Wordsworth); and the currents and commo-

tions of the American cultural terrain, with its factions and rivalries, its questing energies, its fierce loyalties, and its fiercer hatreds.

The really fit biography should duplicate and dramatize a process familiar to us all. You lose, let us say, a parent or a beloved mentor. Once the primary reactions, both universal and personal, begin to fade, you no longer see the reduced and simplified figure, compromised by time—and in Bellow's case encrusted with secondhand "narratives," platitudes, and approximations. You begin to see the whole being, in all its freshness and quiddity. That is what happens here.

Right up to his death, in 1955, Abraham Bellow described Saul as a chronic worry to the family, the only son "not working only writing." Not working? He should tell that to Augie March (for Augie, it turns out, is the author of his *Adventures*):

All the while you thought you were going around idle terribly hard work was taking place. Hard, hard work, excavation and digging, mining, moling through tunnels, heaving, pushing, moving rock, working, working, working, working, panting, hauling, hoisting. And none of this work is seen from the outside. It's internally done. It happens because you are powerless and unable to get anywhere, to obtain justice or have requital, and therefore in yourself you labor, you wage and combat, settle scores, remember insults, fight, reply, deny, blab, denounce, triumph, outwit, overcome, vindicate, cry, persist, absolve, die and rise again. All by yourself! Where is everybody? Inside your breast and skin, the entire cast. □

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Candice BERGEN

This month, the actress who earned five Emmys and two Golden Globes as Murphy Brown on the eponymous CBS sitcom is publishing a second volume of memoirs, *A Fine Romance*. Here, she discusses East Africa and bad toupees

What is your idea of perfect happiness? Watching *Foyle's War* in bed with my husband and the dogs. What is your greatest fear? Dementia. Which living person do you most admire? Jane Goodall. What is the trait you most deplore in yourself? Sloth. What is the trait you most deplore in others? Cruelty. What is your greatest extravagance? A dog-walker in the city. You have no idea. What is your favorite journey? Home. What do you consider the most overrated virtue? Prudence. On what occasion do you lie? Scrabble. What do you dislike most about your appearance? At this point, virtually everything. Which words or phrases do you most overuse? "Oy." What is your greatest regret? Time wasted. What or who is the greatest love of your life? My daughter. When and where were you happiest? Anytime in East Africa. Which talent would you most like to have? Piano. What is your current state of mind? Restless. If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be? To be less judgmental. If you could change one thing about your family, what would it be? That I could thank my parents. What do you consider your greatest achievement? Surviving overprivilege. If you were to die and come



back as a person or thing, what do you think it would be? One of my dogs. If you could choose what to come back as, what would it be? Animal behaviorist. What is your most treasured possession?

(1) A pair of cardboard shoes my daughter made with Q-tips taped inside to massage my feet. (2) A miniature Mayan jade mask. (3) My standing Tiffany lamp. What do you regard as the lowest depth of misery? The life of "cage girls" in Mumbai. Where would you like to live? Kenya in the 40s. What is your most marked characteristic? Impatience. What is the quality you most like in a man? Confidence and depth. What is the quality you most like in a woman? Compassion and humor. What do you most value in your friends? That they be intelligent and engaged. Who are your favorite writers? Lately, Jane Gardam and Hilary Mantel. Who is your favorite hero of fiction? Moley in *The Wind in the Willows*. Who are your heroes in real life? David Saltzman, head of the Robin Hood Foundation. What are your favorite names? Iggy Azalea, Morgan "Wind in Her Hair" Levine, Chanda Lear (the last two are real). What is it that you most dislike? Bad toupees. How would you like to die? Laughing. What is your motto? "Eat dessert first."

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